



## **FOXHILL**

# **EDUCATIONAL CONCEPT**

Bilingual Kindergarten Foxhill  
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## **1. EDUCATIONAL CONCEPT**

- A view of the child and the role of the teachers and assistants

The description of the picture of a child as outlined in the 'Bundeslaenderuebergreifender BildungsRahmen Plan fuer elemantare Bildungseinrichtungen in Oesterreich' is accepted by us in its totality out of a conviction of its suitability. Also our values are reflected in the roles of teachers and assistants in the same document.

Of course, as an international kindergarten, we are challenged as the image of a child differs in different cultures. For example, in many cultures girls are guided largely in the direction of work within the home and less towards academical education.

- Principles of the educational process in early years education settings

The principles of a successful early years education are beautifully described in the 'RahmenPlan' (General Educational Plan) and provide our teachers with an excellent framework for the daily education of young children.

These principles are the bedrock upon which we base our daily practice in all situations. They guide us through all play and educational situations and support the children in their development.

We take these principles into consideration in all our planning and they lead us into our practical work with the children.

## **2. EDUCATIONAL UNDERSTANDING**

- Our view of early childhood development

Basic education is achieved when children are encouraged to act independently and are given the opportunity to participate in a social and cultural environment and to develop a sense of responsibility.

All children have varying all-encompassing needs, which they process using all their senses. In this way the learning process becomes both physical (utilising fine and gross motor skills) and mental.

The principles that above all need to be encouraged and enabled are those of empowerment, intercultural awareness, personal and social orientation and learning utilising all of the senses. Our educational setting places emphasis on the development of the entire child.

- What will children learn in our setting?

Children can develop competencies in varying situations through our flexible, measured and differentiated treatment of each individual. These competences are built upon the active, self-guided nature of the education on offer. Children develop different capabilities throughout their lives and we build on what the child already knows. It is important to look at what a child has already learnt, and what interests he/she has, in order to guide their potential. All children will be appropriately guided

and motivated in their pursuit of independence, subject knowledge, social competence, preferred learning styles and level of language, whether local or foreign.

- The importance of self-guided play

Curiosity and pleasure in play are innate in children. People are born with the need to play and this continues throughout a lifetime. Humans discover, explore and recognise the world through play. It is imperative that every child has the chance to engage in self-guided, or free, play. Play has an important role to play in every stage of a child's development. It is therefore imperative, that teachers have a sound understanding of childhood play in order to promote and encourage the play world of the child .

Children learn about life through play! No healthy child needs encouragement or external motivation to play – they simply play. While playing, a child builds on prior experience and observations and develops new capabilities. Free play helps a child to develop interests, enviable flights of fancy, tireless experimentation and to establish good concentration and continuing engagement in an absorbing activity. The child learns stamina, sensitivity, flexibility, problem solving, creative conflict resolution alongside social skills and communication, all of which are the highly valued building blocks for social cohesion. We, as teachers, promote and encourage children to follow their personal interests in any way we can.

Source citation: Convincingly presenting the value of children's play

DON BOSCO publishing house

Margit Franz: 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 2018

- Framework for the educational process. How do we shape the children's learning environment?

We try to create the dynamic environment described in 'Bundeslaenderuebergreifender BildungsRahmenPlan fuer elementare Bildungseinrichtungen in Oesterreich' where possible together with the children. The physical space is, after all, where the children will be spending many hours of the day.

Material resources: We have a large, bright room stocked with educational resources

We constantly alter and add to these materials for play and education

We are equipped with media and IT resources

We have a large outdoor area:

We regard the large fenced field as a huge positive for our learning environment as it offers many opportunities for furthering an educational exploration of nature.

Daily outdoor learning opportunities are a fixed component of our schedule

We also consider the neighbouring farm to be an enrichment to our environment

Personnel: We have sufficient trained staff to further the individual needs of the children and to support the education of children from a variety of backgrounds (after all they come from many different countries)

Our financial resources are judiciously used to provide the best for the children. We tend to place priority on the number of staff and we always make use of team meetings (also with the staff of the Primary School) to reflect on what we do and to create a good balance.)

### **3. EDUCATIONAL AREAS OF THE FRAMEWORK**

- Outline of how we implement the plan

The Education Plan is complemented by elements of the British EYFS plan which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage> and enhanced by elements of the British KS1 Primary School stage at <https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum>

#### Our Mission Statement at FOXHILL English Pre-School

##### **Our goals are to provide**

- Child-centred, creative quality education, where the needs of all are fulfilled, supported and even surpassed with English as the second language
- A challenging, dynamic and global education programme in German and English
- An eclectic range of suitable educational methodologies, which are appropriate to the individual intellectual progress of each child, incorporating their physical, mental, psychological, social and emotional development
- The use of materials, practices and strategies appropriate to the development of individuals
- Appropriate early literacy and numeracy activities
- A safe learning environment and positive learning experiences in all fields – physical, mental, psychological, social and emotional

##### **We promote**

- Early childhood foreign language development
- The chance for children to reach their highest potential through experience and experiment at a functional level, in order to provide a solid foundation for the development of skills, knowledge and values
- Outstanding academic and social education for all children
- A holistic approach to learning, whereby children gain an integrated experience of all areas of learning
- Excellent communication skills in German and English through outstanding teaching in all four areas of communication (reading, writing, speaking and listening) resulting in standards above that of the National Curriculum
- The ability to think independently, creatively and critically with full recourse to their own personalities and ideas

- The development of children into imaginative thinkers who are able to attempt to tackle complex problems in a creative and independent manner through reflection and critical evaluation
- The development of a secure understanding of local, regional, national and global responsibility
- Mutual respect and appreciation of others, self-discipline, good behaviour and morals both within the Foxhill setting and outside of it
- Intercultural and global awareness
- Lifelong love of learning

<b>FOXHILL MOTTO: 'We do not teach classes we teach children'</b>
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#### **4. DAILY ROUTINES**

The daily routine is of course flexible and weather-dependent

07.30 – 08.00:	Arrival and individual tasks
08.00 – 09.30:	Weekly song, free play, tidy up time etc.
09.40 – 09.55:	Carpet time: Revision (calendar, songs, weather letters, numbers etc.) Children's news, discussions etc
09.55 – 10.00:	Collecting snack boxes, setting tables and washing hands
10.00 – 10.30:	Break / snack time (all ages together)
10.30 – 10.40:	Clearing up
10.40 – 12.00:	A variety of educational activities (music, art and crafts, science, geography, P.E., outdoor activities)
12.00 – 12.30:	Story time / Pick up time
12.30 – 13.30:	Lunch break
13.30 – 16.00:	diverse activities, art and crafts, sports, projects, outings, nature experiments etc., all flexible and weather-dependent

#### **5. INTEGRATION PERIOD**

An indispensable criterium for enabling a child to settle into a new educational setting is the co-operative approach between parents and staff. This is the be-all and end-all of all good quality integration, education and care of children. A child can only start learning when they feel completely secure in a new setting and have developed a trusting relationship with the new caregivers. In this there is no difference between the youngest children, those in kindergarten or those already in school. The only difference lies in the way feelings of trust and security are gained. This is our strength and responsibility and we take the individual needs of each child very seriously in our efforts to help them settle in.

The time it takes for a child to settle in and the manner in which it happens will vary for every child and every family and will be approached individually by us. No two situations are ever the same – except maybe with twins.

It is important that a child feels safe, secure, loved and valued and accepted within the group. A child will find it easier to separate from its parents once it has developed a closer relationship with the teachers built on trust.

Other children within the group can support and accelerate a new child by inviting them to play.

It also has to be taken into consideration that it is also hard for a parent to separate from a child. We take it upon ourselves to reassure the parents that their child will be well looked after and treated with love and respect.

However you define integration, it is a time that needs mutual co-operation and respect as well as an individual approach. There is no 'one size fits all'.

## **6. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND STAFF**

### Parents

- Parents' Association duties
- Assistance with festivals and celebrations
- Parents' meetings / developmental discussions are offered
- Any problems arising should be solved together through co-operation between parents and families, and if necessary, with the involvement of the relevant authorities
  
- Through student placement from various European universities, eg: in Spain, Greece, Slovakia and Holland
- Placements through the Erasmus Programme
- Co-operation with other external organisations, such as The Climate Protection Programme, the Red Cross, various companies and institutions who have worked with us on projects and excursions

## **7. STAFF MANAGEMENT / TEAMWORK**

- Areas of responsibility

Director / Lead teacher

Take responsibility for all areas of the curriculum and daily timetables.

General organisation, organisation of time / co-operation with the Dept. of Education (KIBET) / administration tasks in co-operation with the School Administrator / leadership of the team

Further English speaking teachers and assistants (native speakers) are an enrichment, especially for children's acquisition of English. They also provide a link to the lead teacher for those children who do not speak German.

All staff are responsible for the education, safety and physical well-being of all children.

- Means of communication and co-operation

Parents and Staff Members

- Supervision and support
- Communication within the team (exchange of ideas, suggestions for improvements, criticism...)
- Brainstorming sessions
- Individual and group reflection days
- Regular meetings concerned solely with the progress of each child
- Individual meetings with parents when requested by them
- Individual and group meetings with the children

## **8. Precise Implementation of our Concept in all Areas**

The image of the child and the perception of teachers and assistants of their role  
Children learn by using all their senses and their complete environment. We want to support children to learn languages through play in the setting of the kindergarten and to use the environment to continually make them aware of the English language.  
As children are naturally curious and open to new things, we feel we can guide them on an ongoing language learning journey

Positive aspects of this are:

- We offer all day care
- We have a German speaking director of the kindergarten to provide the children with a comprehensible and safe environment
- We provide a playful environment, offering many opportunities for the child's further development, alongside provision of activities and tasks in English
- A teaching assistant with English as their native language
- A large open field with access to Bobby Cars, tractors, a slide and swings, which provide the children with many opportunities to develop physically and actively

We can use all these resources to further the children's complete development. We can take each individual child into account:

The child is always at the centre of our educational endeavours. We regard each child as an individual, with their own wants, needs and curiosity, all of which can be taken into consideration in our daily activities. For us the children are the creators of their development and so have the right to participate actively in choices about the day's activities. We provide spaces where the children can experience many things and can put their ideas and imagination into practice. We see each child as a social being, who has an interest and need to meet other people, to seek relationships with them and to fulfil their innate need to communicate. Children here should understand that we take them seriously and that they will always receive support and encouragement from us.

For us the children are active participants in learning about the world through play. We provide the frame within which they can do this, with physical and mental activities to support their development.

### **Principles**

In this era of European engagement and multi-cultural societies, mutual understanding must be at the forefront. The means to achieve this is through the advantage of speaking more than one language. Knowing a second language is like a gift, opening up a world of opportunities. Early years educational facilities provide the conditions to enable children to learn additional languages confidently and without pressure.

Every child has the capability to do this. The ability to learn a language is innate in all of us. It is a pleasure to be able to promote and facilitate this in our kindergarten.

Foxhill Kindergarten envisions, in accordance with the Principles of Early Education of Tirol, that the predominantly monolingual children here can acquire a second language playfully and naturally. This can take place in children of kindergarten age from 3 years onwards through daily communication. By this time children are secure in their mother tongue. Whereas in traditional, formal educational settings there is one teacher specialist who ONLY speaks German and another who ONLY speaks English, in our kindergarten it is irrelevant if the native speaker is the main teacher or the assistant.

The importance of a kindergarten in current times can be seen in the goals it is tasked with. Our children should be supported to become self-reliant and socially responsible. This aim is to be achieved through the care, upbringing and education of each child. This is way we, as a staff, must provide the children with an educational and organisational programme relevant to their needs. It is vital for the children's wellbeing that there is established positive co-operation between all stakeholders – the parents, kindergarten teachers, school personnel etc. If a child can establish a trusting relationship with all members of the team, then he or she is able to form their own relationships with themselves and others. When this basis is established the child is then able to engage fully with the learning process.

### **Educational Concept**

Children are all capable of learning languages, the first as well as the second or third. In the kindergarten it is a natural process of language acquisition. The second language is learnt in the same way as the first. This language acquisition is not affected by the intelligence or circumstances of the child. Children unconsciously use the same experiences in learning the second language as they did with the first.

The chance to learn the second language is like all the other everyday opportunities provided by our staff, such as physical, musical or creative education. This means that communication in whatever language is a natural part of the kindergarten day.

With this concept we would like to give a small glimpse into our future daily activities. By creating a written copy it also provides us with the chance to keep the concept



foremost in our minds as we go about our daily tasks and it enables us to reconsider and make adjustments when necessary. This is not to be considered a completed piece of work, but a 'work in progress', which means we are always open to new ideas and stimulation and can enhance and adjust this should the need arise.

Individual encouragement is a large and important part of our educational concept. This means we aim to keep the needs of the child at the centre of all our work. We aim to support the strengths of the child while providing the time and space to address their areas of weakness, enabling them to move forward stronger. We aim to pick up every child from their own point on the learning journey and to do so we provide them with a structure within which they have the freedom to make their own decisions and choices. This freedom of choice gives each child the opportunity to discover new things and to develop and strengthen their perception of the world around them. It is important for us to provide the children with an appealing, safe and secure environment. That way they are free to develop, to discover their talents and gain practical experience of the world. The interests and needs of the children are always at the forefront! Certain conditions are necessary for all children to be supported in the best and most individual manner. We offer independence within a supportive framework so that the children can develop into socially and emotionally into enthusiastic learners. Every child should: be socially integrated, develop a sense of community, act independently, become self-reliant, self-confident and emotionally balanced.

### **Supporting Skill Development**

In the kindergarten we further the development of diverse abilities according to the age and developmental stage of the children. This includes all forms of language acquisition.

Every child is capable of learning. Learning a second language on entering education does not hinder the child's learning in any other area. Immersion in a second language works well with children of all abilities.

The success of bilingual education in the kindergarten depends on the people involved. It is important that even colleagues who only speak German to the children are aware of the importance of being bilingual. This value is imparted to the children subconsciously. The longer, the more intense and the more varied this imparting of language is, the better the outcomes in the second language. The longer the child spends in the kindergarten the better their language acquisition will be. It is true that the children will more likely speak German to each other, as this is the language of communication and they all know the other children speak it. Children who spend 3 years in the kindergarten and attend on a daily basis will be able to speak in English sentences and conduct age-appropriate dialogue in that language. English should be fun for the children and they should enjoy learning and speaking it.. All children will be supported and furthered in the development of their social and personal abilities, in their knowledge of the world and in their learning.

Every child should develop confidence in the physical and mental capabilities and learn to value these. Making mistakes or needing to further develop a capability does not exclude a child from any activity.

We consider our kindergarten to be a safe and inclusive place for every child. The children should experience and enjoy the feeling of community we foster. This includes building relationships with others, learning to solve social problems peaceably and accepting rules and boundaries.

At the heart of all our activities lies the promotion of curiosity, the love of learning and the enjoyment of doing things together. Included in this is age-appropriate promotion of motor skills, verbal and non-verbal communication and the awareness of all the senses. Communication between teachers, parents and children is vital. Children don't only learn through cognitive programmes, but also need to actively participate and experience learning activities. Scientific research has proven that the best way to learning is through active participation.

### **Free Play**

While playing children develop existing capabilities and learn new ones. Through free play children learn a whole host of competences that are valued by communities and society as a whole. These competences include: the following of interests, good concentration, pursuit of a goal, love of learning, endless experimentation, amazing flexibility in taking on different roles, determination, stamina, sensitivity and communication. Therefore, free play must always have high status. Real play can only occur where children have freedom to explore, be spontaneous and the opportunity to decide themselves what they will play, how they will do it, who they will play with and for how long. Independence of choice creates motivation for the learning process. We place great value on free play, precisely because we are so aware of its importance. Free play fosters a willingness to learn, self-discovery, spontaneity and creativity without any compulsion. If the parent asks the child 'What did you do today?' and they answer 'I played' then we have achieved the best possible result.

### **Learning Environment of the Children**

The general condition of the daily learning environment can be described by the term 'immersion', which means an all-encompassing use of language. This is the modern method of acquiring a language. Use of the second language is part of our daily practice in all areas of the kindergarten. Spoken language is supported by gesture and demonstration. For example, as the teacher bends to pick up the ball, she says 'I'm picking up the ball.' The children learn the language by experiencing the situation in which it is used. Naturally we also have many appropriate resources in the kindergarten, the exercise space and outside on the playing field.

### **Portfolio**

A child's portfolio accompanies them throughout their time at the kindergarten. It is begun when they join the kindergarten and is added to – much like the development of the child itself – as they journey through their time with us. It documents the

learning journey of each individual child. The contents of the portfolio are not subject to evaluation and therefore there is no pressure placed on a child to perform. The portfolio contains sections, such as 'Me', 'I can', 'My family' and 'Friends'. These sections are decorated with symbols that are familiar to the child. Our aim is that every child can say, with the help of the portfolio, 'I can learn when I want to!' and 'This is what I do when I want to learn!'

The portfolio states the name, birthdate, symbol and group that the child belongs to. The child can draw in it himself. This 'introduction folder' is hung in the cloakroom and remains there for the whole year. If the child completes a particularly good piece of art, for example, this can also be displayed with the portfolio. In this area too, we keep ourselves up to date through further education and exchanges with other colleagues.

### **Open Method of Working**

This does not just mean that the doors are open, but indicates a constant desire to develop further in every direction. We offer the children space and materials to be able to conduct independent and guided work. Our rules are clear and precise and the same for everyone. Togetherness encourages independence, self-confidence, self-belief and a sense of responsibility. Comfortable rooms provide space for free play and observation opportunities: twice a year we take the time to document our observations. We have a separate form for each age group. This paperwork supports on the one hand our work with the children, and on the other provides evidence for discussions with parents.

### **Festivals and Celebrations**

Celebrations provide a contrast to daily life. When we have one, the rooms are decorated accordingly. On special occasions we might have a communal snack with nicely decorated tables. In which case the food will be appropriate to the celebration. Sometimes guests will also be invited to celebrate with us.

### **Projects**

When embarking on a project we plan and implement it in co-operation with the children. We also find out if parents or anyone else can contribute to it - discussions may be had at a parents' meeting. If parents and teachers can work together on such occasions it enhances the communal educational goals of us all. A project could include health education, outings and excursions.

### **Physical Education / Nature**

Movement plays a major role in the development of every child. Physical exercise and exploration of the world through the senses are the basic needs of a child. We are committed to providing the children with sufficient opportunities for exercise both indoors and out, through free play and directed activities.

### **Ethics and Values**

Early years educational establishments help the child to develop a values system before they start school. They learn how to treat other people through belonging to a group. Pre-school children are very capable of differentiating between good and bad behaviour and have a fine-tuned understanding of fairness. Introducing them to philosophical questions and providing meaningful experiences helps them to develop an ability to judge and evaluate and supports their religious understanding.

We ask parents to give written permission for their children to take part in religious activities in the kindergarten. If such participation is not required, we will make alternative arrangements.

### **Inclusion**

Growing development and an understanding of different personal and social requirements enables a child to begin to see diversity among people.

### **Diversity**

Spending time together in the kindergarten allows children to notice changes in our cultural diversity. Noticing these differences challenges their linguistic, social and cognitive development. Particularly in the final year of kindergarten, children are able to relate different viewpoints to each other. Judgements can be articulated. In order to understand the different needs of individuals and to balance the interests of the group, children develop an egocentric attitude. We support this in every way.

### **Transition from an Early Years Setting into the Primary School**

Every transition brings with it changes in the child's environment. Children begin individually to question their own identity. Their main point of contact changes, as well as their peer group. The child has to get used to the environment of the school and integrate this into his/her life. The length of time it takes a child to adjust varies enormously, but we as a team, including pre-school and primary school staff, are there to support them every step of the way.

The support of parents for their children in the final year of kindergarten and the ongoing observations and documentation of the child's development support the children in a stress free transition.

### **Aesthetics and Design**

We support the children to engage with art on every level. Familiar and unfamiliar works can be compared and contrasted objectively.

- Creative Expression

It is our aim to support children in their sense of rhythm enabling them to move in time to music and to clap the beat. They can learn to differentiate between the tones of different musical instruments.

### **Language/ Development/ Support from us**

- Initial language assessment

- Ensuring the native language is not neglected or abandoned
- Co-ordination between us and the next school, in order to ensure further development of language skills into the written phase
- Positive agreement through the attitude of parents and teachers
- Practice at home is vital
- Language assessment

### **BESK – Observations and assessment of language competence**

This has been developed in order to assess the level of language acquisition, both for children with German as a first and second language. On the basis of this assessment the child can be supported in their language development in a playful and integrated manner and thus prepared for the transition into Primary School. This comprehensive assessment of language is conducted annually with every child in the facility and is evaluated, documented and sent to local government.

### **Observation forms**

Twice a year we take the time to document our observations. We have a separate form for each age group. This paperwork supports on the one hand our work with the children, and on the other provides evidence for discussions with parents.

### **Daily Routine**

The daily routine in the kindergarten is flexible and can be influenced by many factors. There is a constant flux between phases of activity and concentration, relaxation and tiredness. On arrival in their own group, the children have the chance to develop their own activities in a time structure provided by us. During this time they can choose whether to play outside, in the sports hall or if they wish to make the most of the toys provided in the group room. During this time they also have their snack. (The theme of healthy food is important to us and is discussed and/or projects started with Avomed)

Despite our prepared daily timetable, we remain flexible at all times and can adjust our activities according to the weather.

We have a quiet room, providing the opportunity for a relaxation period after lunch.

### ***MORNING***

#### Orientation Phase

Transition from the family to the kindergarten. Time to adjust to the daily routine in the kindergarten

- personal greeting
  - personal contact
  - time to watch and observe
  - free choice to take up an activity
  - planned activity within a group
  - choice of partners and games
- (morning circle with instruments / counting children etc.)

First period of concentration

Time for intense activity; chance to try a new activity or learn something new  
Choice of different, interesting games and activities

### ***Recreational phase***

Time to relax

- Opportunity for freer, unconstrained movement in the sports hall or outside
- Snack time

Second period of concentration

Opportunities for children to engage in activities to promote social-emotional integration. To this end there are certain fixed times in the day, which all the children in a group experience together. This is to promote a sense of belonging. Children learn to take others feelings into account, they find their place within the group and experience being part of a community. The children should feel secure, safe and embedded within the wider context.

- Opportunities to undertake activities complementary to those of the first concentrations phase
- Opportunities to complete or extend projects already begun

Wind-down time

Time to gradually end the activities and return children to their families

- Reliving experiences
- Completing work begun
- Tidying up of toys
- Feedback to each other about the experiences of the morning and the chance to show finished work
- Planning and leavetaking

### ***AFTERNOON***

Orientation phase

Time to adjust to the rest of the day

- Starting new activities or relationships or continuing those already begun

### **Transition from the Family to the Kindergarten Setting**

The way the transition from the family to the kindergarten is handled is of utmost importance to the child, the parents and the kindergarten staff. A new phase is beginning for the family, which could well cause not just joy, but also engender a few fears and so these feelings need to be addressed. We have a transition concept that we offer as a basis for a good start into our facilities. It is a concept, conceived with the awareness that all parties need to develop a trusting and support relationship with one another.

#### Our Educational Aims

Child, parents and staff need to get to know each other. Teachers and child need to develop a lasting connection. The child needs to feel secure and accepted. The new

child and the other children need the opportunity to get to know each other and form relationships.

Parents get to know the space in which we work and receive information about the education and the organisational framework of the kindergarten.

### Registration and Admission Policy

Children can be registered at any time, not just on registration days. On registration there will be an initial discussion between the parents and the kindergarten management. The parents will have the facilities explained and the transition concept and our educational concept will be introduced. All necessary paperwork will be handed out. Parents will be shown around the kindergarten rooms and so can form an impression of the daily routines.

We model our kindergarten on the 'Berlin Model', a concept that takes into account the findings of research into attachment theories.

#### 1. Three Day Basic Phase

One of the parents comes to the kindergarten with the child and spends 1-2 hours there with them for 3 days. In those initial 3 days there is no attempt to leave the child. The parent takes a backseat, but pays close attention to their child – the parent thereby becomes a safe base for the child. The teacher approaches the child in this time carefully and observes the situation.

#### 2. First Attempt at Separation and Initial Decision about the Timing of the Transition Phase

The parent comes to the kindergarten with the child on the 4<sup>th</sup> day, says goodbye to the child after a few minutes in a clear and positive manner and leaves the room for about 30 minutes, but stays out of sight within the building.

##### Variant 1:

The child remains calm or cries, but is comforted by the teacher, calms down and returns to the group.

##### Variant 2:

The child protests, cries and is either comforted or begins to cry again without obvious reason.

#### 3. Settling in Phase

Shorter settling in period

On the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> days the period of separation from the parent is lengthened and the child is encouraged to participate in the usual activities, such as playing, eating and going to the toilet and they are closely observed by staff; the parent stays within the building.

Longer settling in period

Days 5 – 10: Consolidation of the relationship with the teacher / or a renewed attempt at separation on the 7<sup>th</sup> day at the earliest; this settling in period can be extended, depending on the reaction of the child, for 2-3 weeks.

## **Co-operation with Parents**

Kindergarten staff and parents should share responsibility for the education and upbringing of the child and so work closely together.

In order for the child to have a positive experience of the kindergarten it is vital that the staff and the parents develop a close and open working relationship

- Contact with the Parents

In this section the opportunities for informal and formal talks about individual children with, where possible, both parents will be discussed.

Discussions on the Threshold

These kind of informal, fleeting talks will form the most frequent form of contact with the parents. Every effort should be made to keep them up throughout the year.

- Parents Consultations

During these meetings there should be a mutual exchange of information about the child, covering their behaviour and emotional welfare, their preferences and their friendships with other children.

- Developmental Meetings

These should extensively cover the development of the child.

- Counselling Sessions

These meetings should provide an opportunity to discuss at length any peculiarities of differences on the part of the child. They require an appropriate setting, good preparation and professional guidance.

- Conflict Discussions

These discussions will be required by the kindergarten team if the parents do not keep to rules and agreements.

- Parent Meetings

These are a combination of the parent consultation meetings and the development discussions. An appointment should be made and the meeting should last about 30 minutes

## **In conclusion – OUR ROLES**

### **The Role of the Teacher**

Accompanying the parents and children throughout the kindergarten (with support from teaching assistants)

Ongoing observations and documentation of the child's development contribute significantly to positive guidance from the educators.

### **Educational Partnerships in Transitions Times**

Alongside all the competencies that are vital for the success of transitions periods everyone bears responsibility: the family, the early years educators and the Primary School should all be involved.

### **Assistants**

English speaking support assistants (native speakers)



*Together we want to offer the children a wonderful educational experience throughout the kindergarten years and to prepare them in the best possible way for the future. Until they have to leave school...*



How lucky am I to have  
something that makes saying  
goodbye so hard.

- Winnie the Pooh