



**Little Daisies**  
Bilinguale Kindertagesstätte



# Curriculum for Little Daisies Crèche

In accordance with the Finnish Curriculum and the BayKiBiGV

Last updated: January 2022

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Dear Parents and Interested Parties,

The following curriculum introduces you to our work in the Little Daisies crèche. Our aim in this document is to give you a closer look at where we set our educational priorities as well as everyday life at Little Daisies.

We know this curriculum is not set in stone. Changes may occur in the center's setup, in the application of new educational methods and theories or in legislation. Similarly, the lives of Little Daisies' families are constantly changing. For one or more of these reasons, we may need to and want to adapt what we do. That's why we regularly review our curriculum as part of the quality management measures at the center. Doing so also gives our staff a chance to understand and reflect on our curriculum's content, goals and methods. As representatives of Little Daisies' parents, the parent board is also involved in our curriculum's evolution. We prioritize establishing trust between families and teachers, which we express in continual dialog, collaboration and shared reflection.

“The children come first” is our mission statement. It's only natural that the interests and needs of Little Daisies' children lay the foundation of our work. Each day we discover the world along with the children, in a hands-on and constructive way. The basis for this is trust, security and a loving environment that provides the children with a strong foundation for their growth and development.

Little Daisies crèche accepts children under 3 years old, regardless of their parents' religion, belief system, nationality or social class.

We wish your children a happy and enriching experience at the crèche and hope we live up to our guiding principles.

Munich, June 30, 2021



Cornelia Ottersbach  
Owner

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# 1. Introduction

This educational concept acts as the basis for our pedagogical work at the Little Daisies crèche.

We follow the Bavarian Qualification and Education Plan (Bayerischer Bildungs- und Erziehungsplan or BEP). The Finnish Curriculum that is used as the basis of pedagogic work in Finnish kindergartens and crèches is also included in our concept. Both the BEP and Finnish Curriculum state that the social context in which a child learns plays a primary role in that child's development. The Finnish approach enriches the Bavarian concept through its ideas on early introduction of a second language and its strong emphasis on the welfare of the group. The development and enrichment of the individual is an integral part of this process. Outlined in the following pages are how we work, what goals we are aiming for, and the organizational matters at Little Daisies.

## 2. Our Mission Statement

*The children come first.*

*We offer them the opportunity to develop to their full potential in a safe, positive and creative environment. Every child will feel special at Little Daisies and will learn that they are a valuable part of the group.*

*In order to reach this goal, we strive to continually develop as individuals and as a team.*

Our Mission Statement shows our commitment to the child and our pedagogical work:

“The children come first.” - The whole of our work and attention is centered on the children and their complete welfare. We shift our attention to other things only when we are certain that the children are being well looked after. Here, we follow the guiding principle that children and adults at Little Daisies are equal but don't have equal rights. In our approach, we pay attention to what makes each individual unique. We seek to be in touch with all children at Little Daisies, to understand them, accept them, and acknowledge them for who they are. By nature, children are curious and want to grow and develop. Little by little, children learn to be more responsible for themselves, to act independently and, later on, to act on behalf of others. However, adults are ultimately responsible for and have the power to decide about children's safety, the quality of relationships and general mood in the center. Adults also enable children to be creative and to reach their full potential. Teachers observe the children and, based on each child's developmental stage, decide how much responsibility and decision making power to give a child to keep it challenged without overwhelming him or her.

“We offer them the opportunity to develop to their full potential in a safe, positive and

creative environment.” – The main purpose of crèche education is to give children new developmental and educational opportunities, which can only happen in a loving environment among people they trust. This supports and strengthens the children’s physical, mental, social, cognitive and emotional development. This development along with the encouragement of caregivers fosters the children’s confidence and independence. They can be creative and discover their environment and be keen to learn new things that expand and enrich their experiences. Through multifaceted, creative activities and learning materials, we offer the children the opportunity to realize their potential within their own learning style and speed. We also try to recognize any difficulties and find ways to support them.

“Every child will feel special at Little Daisies and will learn that they are a valuable part of the group.” – At Little Daisies, we view each child as an individual, recognizing their uniqueness and personality. We support the children in their current developmental stage and show them that the world is open for them and they can trust their own abilities. At our center, we identify the children’s individual needs and make them part of our teaching. Children are actively involved in the daily agenda and their activities. Equally important is each child’s social development. The children learn they are social entities and that they need to abide by certain rules to be part of this community. Aware of bias, they learn how to deal with conflict, make friends, and accept children from other cultures, genders and abilities, without prejudice. By being part of a group they see first-hand how many things are easier as a team and that each person can contribute their own strengths.

“To reach this goal, we strive to continually evolve as individuals and as a team.”

Working as educators committed to providing high-quality care, it is important for us, as individuals and as a team, to continually advance our know-how and skills. Our daily actions set an example for the children. We must be aware of this at all times and ensure our behavior is appropriate.

### 3. Guidelines and Framework

#### *3.1 Hours of Operation and Booking Times*

The Little Daisies Crèche is open, Monday to Friday, from 8:00 to 17:30. Parents have a choice of the following booking times: 3-4 hours, 4-5 hours, 5-6 hours, 6-7 hours, 7-8 hours, 8-9 hours and over 9 hours. Our core time is between 9 to 11.30am, this is the time, when all children have to be present. Only during our introduction period there will be deviations from the core time.

Every year the crèche is closed between December 23 and January 7 and between August 13 and 31. It is also closed on one day before and one day after the public Easter holiday. Additionally, Little Daisies is closed on Bavarian public holidays and on five additional days for team in-service and curriculum work.

Any other opening or closure dates will be set in agreement with the parent board.

### 3.2 *Group Size, Teaching Staff and Staff Absences*

There are two groups, the Caterpillar Group and the Butterfly Group, that are made up of 12 children between 1 and 2 years of age and between 2 and 3 years of age, respectively. Each group is cared for by four qualified members of the teaching staff.

This ensures that even if one person is absent, there are enough staff people present to care for the children. Should multiple teachers be absent in parallel, we will contact a substitute. We keep and update a list of substitutes that have worked for us time and again for many years, which means they are familiar with our routines and know the children.

### 3.3 *Foreign Language Crèche*

From January 1, 2020 to December 21 2022, our center is participating in a national program entitled, “Foreign Language Crèche: Languages Are the Key to the World”. The program is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Families, Seniors, Women and Children. During the timeframe, the staff is supported and mentored by an additional part-time (19.5 hours/week) qualified team member and an external advisor.

Over the course of the program, the teaching staff learns to systematically observe **language development** of children as well as their own language use. From this, ideas are generated that can be applied to regular language education in the crèche. Everyday situations are accompanied verbally, according to children’s development and age, and the children are given a variety of opportunities to speak up and to try out their own language. In addition to the practical work, an additional specialist informs the team about the additional theoretical topics covered in the area previously mentioned. Inclusive education and collaborating with families are also focal points.

When **working with families**, we seek to create from the outset an equal and valued educational partnership that focuses on a child’s well-being. By asking certain questions, whether at the first parent evening or in the contract documents, we learn about parental expectations of the kindergarten. It is important for us to let parents participate in the educational process of their child. For instance, through intercultural parents cafés, multilingual offers in the morning circle and our music day. This allows us to get to know the knowledge level, skills and interests of the families, so we can expand the educational offerings of the center. If necessary, we support families with counseling and educational activities such as theme-based parent evenings on healthy nutrition and school enrolment. As successful

educational partners, we regard all those involved, parents as well as teachers, as partners, experts, supporters, role models, people with feelings and individual life stories.

Being inclusive means, we view each child as an individual and treat them with respect, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural background, competences or other characteristics. All children have the same opportunity to participate in everyday life at the center, such as children's conferences, projects and activities. This helps us ensure equal educational opportunities long term.

### *3.4 Responsible Body and Publication of Information*

The responsible body of the center is Little Daisies GmbH. This curriculum as well as the monthly tuition, meal costs, deposit and admission fees are published on our website, [www.littledaisies.com](http://www.littledaisies.com).

### *3.5 Classroom Setup at Little Daisies*

The rooms of the crèche, divided into the Caterpillar and Butterfly Groups, are divided into spaces with different areas of educational focus that the children to explore. Throughout the center, the children's work (pictures, crafts, photos, etc.) is displayed, so they see traces of themselves reflected in their surroundings.

These are:

- Role-playing corner (dolls, dress-up clothes, play store and kitchen) for social development
- Arts and crafts area in which children have free access to drawing material to encourage their fine motor skills and creativity
- A car and construction space for creative play
- A cozy corner with stuffed animals and a reading corner
- A sensory corner with a sensory table for experiences involving the five senses
- Games, puzzles and fine motor skills area
- Two playrooms with space for gross motor skills, including a trampoline and climbing wall. Double as a nap room.
- One of the playrooms contains a building and car area
- Outdoor play area with podium, sandbox, and climbing blocks
- Children toilets and separate adult toilet
- Kitchen

The Caterpillar and Butterfly Groups can be separated or joined together by opening or closing two sliding doors. The center also has a small break room for teachers, which is also used as an office and meeting space for parent-teacher conferences.

The fenced-in outdoor play area offers approximately 60 square meters for free play. It features a sandbox, a grassy area with a playhouse and tunnel, and wooden blocks and boards for balancing. We are also permitted to use the entire courtyard, including the areas outside the fence. The children often play in these spaces, pushing their wheelbarrows and scooting their bobby cars on imaginary streets.

## 4. General Goals of our Education Program

### 4.1 *General Educational Goals*

On the one hand, the goals of crèche education reflect the unique development potential of each child and, on the other, the needs of society. Children in a crèche for the first time learn that, aside from their families, there are other responsible adults they can bond with. They get to know other children, gradually identify themselves within a group and establish their first friendships. They discover new spaces in the rooms at Little Daisies and explore a new world of experiences.

The children's positive self-awareness, as well as their gender awareness, strengthen continuously as they acquire new skills and proficiencies. Learning by playing is essential in this process. The children begin to understand what is right and wrong. Their actions become increasingly responsible and they begin to follow societal rules. They learn social interaction skills and the rules of the classroom. They understand positive social conventions and grasp their meaning in everyday life. They learn better self-control and how to deal with situations that come up regularly. They learn that while people are equal, they are also different and start to accept these differences. In an age-appropriate way, they learn what is important for the maintenance of good health.

The linguistic and cultural identities of the children are supported, and they are encouraged to express their capabilities in many different ways. The children are introduced to different forms of arts and crafts, music, regional and national culture and, to the extent possible, other cultures. The children develop interests in nature. They explore their environment in different ways and are encouraged to be enthusiastic about its beauty and diversity. They learn how their



actions affect the environment. Math, reading and writing basics are all introduced in the crèche. Through the immersion method, they become familiar with English and German in their everyday environment; **multilingualism** is seen as a valuable resource.

We give children the chance to develop the following fundamental capabilities and abilities:

Social and emotional skills

- Building bonds with others, learning how groups work
- Self-awareness, self-confidence and self-control
- Personal expression of needs, feelings and thoughts
- Decision-making and accepting responsibility for decisions made
- Conflict resolution
- Empathy and solidarity with others as well as respect for differences
- Playing alone and working together in a group
- Acceptance of boundaries set by adult and other children
- Patience
- Resilience

Physical and cognitive skills

- Intellectual, artistic, musical and gross and fine motor skills
- Personal hygiene and health
- Respect for the environment, environmental education
- Knowledge of a second language (English/German)
- Basics mathematical principles
- The foundations of reading and writing skills
- Learning how to learn

## 5. How the Educational Program Is Carried Out

### 5.1 *The Learning Process*

The youngest children comprise the Caterpillar Group. Because they learn through play and imitation, it is important that the classroom be set up so that the children can explore freely, all the time knowing that the teachers are available for them. Everything that the children can access is available to be played with and examined. They are able to develop their gross motor skills, for example, by climbing the steps to the loft and by crawling over mattresses and

upholstered cubes and sliding down small slides. They discover the functions of ordinary objects such as chairs, the little sinks or drawers that can be used to store toys.

Young children primarily use their senses to get to know themselves and their environment. Teachers provide children in the Caterpillar Group plenty of exposure to various materials, such as water, dirt, shaving cream, paint, etc., allowing them to explore with them at will.

One of the most important experiences for this age group is realizing they are not alone in the world and that they have playmates. They are part of a group and they learn to trust more than just one teacher.

The older children in the crèche comprise the Butterfly Group. The teachers help them learn to actively acquire new skills and know-how by building on the ones they already have. These experiences occur by interacting with materials and existing knowledge frameworks.

During free play periods, many playthings are made available to the children, including building blocks, toy cars, Legos, dolls and a play store. This gives the children the chance to immerse themselves in the world of imaginative play.

One of the most important goals of this age group is learning to be self-reliant. The children learn to dress themselves, use the toilet and practice good table manners. They begin to grasp what it means to take responsibility for their own behavior.

The children are offered activities which rotate on a daily basis, including music, sports, language, arts and crafts, and nature and experiments. These motivate further learning guided by the teachers.

In situations with their peers, the children learn from and with each other by giving each other the impetus to develop their thinking, their imagination, and their social skills. They learn to communicate with each other and deal with conflicts, and how to play together. They express their needs and wants, and share them with each other.

The children are offered activities, which rotate on a daily basis, including music, sports, language, arts and crafts, and nature and experiments. In doing so, the staff tries to stretch the children's interests by encouraging them to participate. The teachers also encourage children to learn and grow in other ways and reach new developmental milestones. One of the main ones for this age group is becoming self-sufficient. Children learn to dress themselves, use the toilet and have table manners. They begin to understand what it means to be responsible for their own actions.

## 5.2 *Educational Surroundings*

Our well-thought-through classrooms arouse and stimulate a child's curiosity, interest, and motivation, and promote childish activity and a child's ability to become self-absorbed in an activity. Such an environment supports children in their development and learning process as well as in the assessment of their own abilities in many ways. It offers the children ample opportunities to play and do other activities as well as the option to withdraw. It offers areas and facilitates activities that promote communication and gives the children the opportunity to work on language development.

The prevailing atmosphere is cheerful, open, encouraging, loving and serene. All the materials are easily within children's reach. The health and safety of the children is assured in all areas, while maintaining an aesthetic balance wherever possible..

## 5.3 *Educational Concept*

By using the Finish Curriculum, Little Daisies balances allowing the children to develop as individuals, with developing social skills.

### 5.3.1 Classroom Groups and Open Concept

At Little Daisies, each child settles into the center as a part of a group (Caterpillars or Butterflies) with a primary care giver. The group gives the child a sense of security and community and offers them a point of orientation. The day begins with each group having morning circle and a communal breakfast. The children celebrate their birthdays as well as engage in specific activities with their group.

There are times each day in which the children have the opportunity, if they so choose, to leave their group and mingle with the other children and use the other classroom areas. Opening the groups at certain times has the advantage of offering the children a much larger space and a larger variety of materials to use, as well as a wider variety of social interactions to engage in. Through these open times, we acknowledge and work with the individuality of each child. We know that self-initiated, self-regulated, and self-directed choice in their activities, social interactions, and the areas in which they play are optimal for each child's personal development in a given learning environment.

When the classrooms are open, each team member is responsible for a specific area. They may use this time to offer an activity for the children to participate in, or they may act, in particular to stimulate language, as an advisor and observer while children engage in free play.

### 5.3.2 Mixed Age Groups and Separate Age Groups

At Little Daisies there are two, age separated, classroom groups: the Caterpillars and the Butterflies. This makes it possible to offer activities specifically created for the individual classrooms and developmentally appropriate for that age-group. We take field trips with the 2-3 year-olds to forest, or to the zoo. We offer music classes and gross motor activities tailored to each separate age group. We also introduce age related learning opportunities with the younger or older children, such as using scissors.

Younger children also benefit from having older children as role models. They develop independence by observing older children and are exposed to numerous developmental stimuli. It is also important for the older children to learn to be careful around the younger children. Their self-awareness is strengthened through the presence of younger children.

That is why we open the classrooms throughout the day, allowing the different ages to mix and interact with each other. Mixed age groups promotes cooperation and lessens competition, so there are fewer conflicts.

### 5.3.3 A Stimulus-Providing and Observational Teaching Methodology

The teachers are sometimes active participants in activities with the children. Other times they are sideline observers, watching as the children play, explore and acquire information through interactions with other children and adults.

The Finnish method is a style in which adults spark impulses in children as well as have expectations of them and set requirements for them. The teachers are responsible for setting up and upholding boundaries and creating a positive atmosphere at the center. The activities that are offered are child appropriate and take into consideration a child's skills, abilities, feelings, and knowledge. The goal of this process is to offer the opportunity to the children to reach their next developmental step. Activities offered to the children by a teacher are designed so that each child is neither over nor under challenged. No child is held back from achieving a developmental step or has expectations set too high for them. A child that does not want to take part in an activity is never forced to do so. The children always have the right to choose activities they want to take part in. The educational process is a co-constructive process in which both the child and the adults take part, with the child and his or her own

ideas at the core. The teachers help the children to become aware of and contemplate their developmental steps and help them to realize that they are responsible for their own achievements. This helps their self-confidence and transmits important know-how about how they can learn.

Equally important to the stimulus teaching style is the observational one in which a child is given time and space to be creative. During free play, the children explore their environment and have time to develop through their own experiences and imagination. The teachers prepare the rooms for this free play so the children can find materials and play areas in which they can let their creativity unfold freely. During free play, children learn how to socially interact with the other children. They make friends and feel more secure. The children also learn conflict resolution and communication and respect for their own needs and the needs of others. During this time, the teacher takes on the role of a companion and observer of the activities.

#### 5.3.4 Participation in the Crèche

For us, participation means allowing the children, based on their age and development stage, to participate, help create and be involved in decision making. Children at Little Daisies can decide what and who they want to play with. They can also decide if they want to have quiet time or be active. The children may choose what rooms they want to spend time in at center. They also decide how physically close or distant they want to be from others.

Teachers acknowledge the needs of all children and respond to them with gentle care. Teachers also offer a secure environment in which the children can develop at their own pace. When children give off even the slightest signals, such as turning their head away or stiffening their body, the teachers react accordingly. Teachers also encourage the children to respond appropriately to these reactions and signals from other children. Even choosing not to participate is acceptable.

A child-teacher relationship based on trust is required for this form of participation to work. This involves loving communication, dependability, consolation, encouragement, and support. Everyday situations such as meal times, nap times, and diaper changes are used to establish trusting relationships with the children.

Every reaction from a child, such as crying, withdrawal, or hitting, is taken seriously. The teacher accepts it and interpreted by the teachers nearby. The teacher then tries to remove the cause of this behavior and checks regularly with teammates if the presumed cause for this behavior has been removed.

When children already experience at a young age that their opinions and wishes are taken seriously, feel accepted and valued, and notice that they can act on their own, they develop a healthy inner stability for their life.

#### 5.4 *Daily Routine*

A meaningful and structured daily routine is the basis of every good educational system. Of course, such a daily routine must also leave space for spontaneity and creativity, so that learning and experience processes are not interrupted.

Daily routine in the crèche:

##### **In the individual groups:**

- Breakfast, lunch, snack
- Teeth brushing
- Morning circle
- Nap time

##### **In mixed or individual groups**

- Drop off and pick up
- Hygiene (diapering, toileting)
- A balance of free play and teacher directed activities
- A balance of large group and small group activities
- Outside time

##### **In mixed groups:**

During open times:

- Small group activities available simultaneously in different areas of the center (e.g. art area, garden, gross motor room, main class room, experimentation area,
- Towards the middle of the school year, breakfast and snack

#### 5.5 *Education and Observation Plan*

During the settling in period, from September through October, it is extremely important that each new child has the opportunity to feel comfortable in the space and with the teachers. Every developmental milestone is received in a timely way.

Every developmental step must be handled in a time appropriate manner. In the first few months of the school year, weekly settling in schedule will be created for each individual child.

This schedule is agreed on and carried out with the cooperation of the parents. A successful completion of the settling in period is necessary backbone for a child's time at the center.

As soon as the group's dynamic has been established, the children feel comfortable in their surroundings and in the group, and they are ready for new things, the teachers' task is to do group projects with the children that allow them to expand the knowledge they already have about a topic. Educational plans are created on a weekly basis.

There is also a plan set up between the teachers and the parents or guardians of each child to help that child develop, and to work on any areas where they are struggling. To aid this, each child's progress is observed continually and the development is compared with developmental schedules. A formal observation of each child is carried out at least twice a year. We use Beller's developmental checklist to monitor a child's developmental progress. We note the development of each child in a number of areas, including hygiene, awareness of one's surroundings, social interactions, play, gross motor, fine motor, speech and cognition.

After our observations are done, we summarize and evaluate the information about a child.

### *5.6 Collaboration with Parents and Guardians*

Parents and guardians are chiefly responsible for their children's education. It is important to develop mutual trust between the crèche personnel and parents or guardians in order to ensure the child's happiness, development, and progress.

We hold parent-teacher conferences twice a year to discuss the development of each child. We use Beller's developmental checklist as a basis for these talks. The first conference takes place about six weeks after the settling in period. We discuss how the child is adjusting to the crèche; any possible effects on the family the child's attendance at the crèche may have, and answer all other questions. The second parent-teacher conference is held in the late spring. Other meetings can be scheduled at the wish of the parents or educators.

If the teaching staff feels that a child has special needs, we work together with the parents to find suitable support from specialists. Our teaching staff is trained according to the German Schutzauftrag §8a SGB VIII (child endangerment laws), and takes a refresher course every two years. An emergency plan outlines the steps taken should teachers suspect child abuse and they will contact an ISEF specialist. Preventing child abuse will be a topic at a parent evening every second year to ensure parents have all the necessary information on the topic.

Evening meetings for the parents are held three times a year. Subjects dealing with organizational aspects of the crèche, educational questions and upcoming events are raised and discussed. We often offer drinks and snacks so the parents have a chance to meet each other and chat. We also host informational evenings with guest speakers, for example 'Elterncafes', optional parent meet-ups covering a specific topic.

Parents also receive a monthly report, sent home with the children about everything that has happened during the past month in the center. On a daily basis they receive a day sheet that informs them how the child ate, slept and played that day.

The parents are represented by a parent board, which meets every three months with the head teacher of the crèche and the owner to discuss organizational, educational and structural questions with the goal of solving them together. We also work with the parent board to draw up our annual questionnaire to gauge parental satisfaction with the crèche and discuss all educational needs of the parents and the teachers.

## 6. Content of Crèche Educational Program

In this chapter, we first look at the adjustment period for children new to the Little Daisies crèche. After that, we will focus on our seven main developmental areas, the areas that will be concentrated on after the adjustment period. These are as follows: language; math; arts & crafts, music and culture; nature and experiments, physical development, ethics and health.

### 6.1 *Settling in at the crèche*

The settling in process is a delicate time not only in the emotional life of a child, but also in his or her experience of bonding and trusting his or her parents. Parents play a huge role in this process. The goal of the settling in process is to work toward a state of trust between the child and teachers, in collaboration with parents, so that the child manages the transition to the childcare center with the least amount of stress possible.

We follow the Munich Model for our introductions to the center. The first four days, the parents spend about two hours each day in the center with their child, getting to know the center and the routines. Then the parent and child spend two to three hours a day for another six days in the center, with the parent sitting more and more in the background. The parent



leaves the center for the first time on the 11th or 12th day, by which time the child is usually quite comfortable with daily routine and staff. The Münchner Model really allows the child to get to know the center with their parent, and offers the parents the opportunity to really get to know and trust the team and the center.

The settling in process is considered complete when the child accepts the teachers as trusted caregivers and the child can remain at the center from the time he or she is dropped off through nap time, without undue stress. This process typically lasts four to six weeks. Every settling in period is different and based upon the needs of the child. Children who previously attended another childcare center usually have an easier time with the adjustment period.

In order to create a relationship of trust between parent, child and teachers, parents should understand the following stages of the adjustment period. They describe what happens during the settling in period.

- 1) One to two weeks before the first day at the crèche, the children prepare to start at the center.
- 2) Days 1-4 of the settling in process: children get to know the center with a parent.
- 3) Days 5-10 of the settling in process is about building trust by getting to know the daily routine and the caregivers.
- 4) Day 11 or 12 of settling in: dealing with the first separation.
- 5) From there on, the amount of time the child spends in the center slowly increases.
- 6) Conclusion of the settling in period.

### **1) One to two weeks before the first day at the crèche**

- Mention Little Daisies when talking with your child. Explain that he/she will be able to play with other children and adults. Tell your child the names of the teachers in the center, especially the name of their primary care giver. Think of this as factual information you are giving your child. Do not try to 'sell' the idea to them.
- Walk past Little Daisies with your child, pointing it out and telling your child about it.
- Homework for the parents: before your first day, please complete a short portrait of your child. It will be used as a basis for discussion between parents and teachers during your first day at Little Daisies.
- Please decide with your partner who will accompany your child during the adjustment period. Is important that it is the same person every day.

- If possible, try to avoid other major changes in your child's life during the settling in process, such as moving, giving birth to another child or going on a vacation during or shortly after the transition period.

**2) Getting to know the center**  
**4 days, Tuesday through Friday**

- The parent and child are present for about two hours a day in the classroom. There is one primary caregiver for the child and family, however, the child and parent have the opportunity to speak to and meet all team members.
- During this first week, the Primary Caregiver will not lead the parent and child through the day. Rather, the parent will discover and participate with their child at their own pace. The parent is responsible for exploring the center with their child during this introduction phase. The parent and child are welcome and encouraged to explore the entire center, to participate in all activities together, and to experience all parts of a normal day (meals, circle, free play, transitions, etc.).
- The parent may choose to sit to the side with the child and just observe at first, but they should not feel they have to.
- At the end of the week, the primary caregiver will meet with the parent to answer questions and plan the next steps.

Goal: The parent and child get to know the center, the daily routine, and the teachers together. The parent and child can observe how the teachers relate to and interact with the children.

**3) Building trust: Getting to know the daily routine and the primary caregiver**  
**6 days, Monday to Monday**

- The parent and child are at the center for about two hours. The parent is present in the classroom for the child as a 'safe harbor', but allows the team to take over more and more responsibility for the activities and care of the child over the course of the week.
- The primary caregiver tries to take over caring for the basic needs of the child (diapering, feeding, play, problem solving).
- The primary caregiver and the parent will reflect together daily on how the day went.

Goal: The child learns, through repeat exposure, the daily routine in the center. The child becomes more and more comfortable with the primary caregiver and the other teachers. He or she allows them to take care of his or her daily needs.

#### **4) The first separation** **Day 11 or 12 (at the earliest)**

- Once the child has shown, based on various indicators, they are comfortable with the primary caregiver and at the center (for example, the child shows positive feelings and happiness, not just when their parents are near), the child is ready for the parent to leave them at the center for the first time.
- As on previous days, the parent and child come into the classroom and, after the child feels at ease, the parent says goodbye and leaves the center for at 30 minutes.
- If this upsets the child, the child has the time and opportunity, with the support of the Primary Caregiver, to calm down and participate in the daily routine without their parent present. Once the parent returns, the child's day at the center is over
- When the parent returns to pick up the child, the Primary Caregiver and the parent reflect together on the experience and make a plan for the following day.

Goal: The child gets used to being at the center without a parent and has the opportunity to work through their feelings with the help of the primary caregiver.

#### **5) Each day, the child stays longer at the center**

- After the first (successful) separation, we start to increase each day the time the child stays with us, without parents. This process can take anywhere from 12 to 15 days.
- We would like to reassure parents that if their child cannot be consoled while they are gone, we will call them. The children and parents' welfare is very important to us. We would never force your child to stay if the timing just isn't right.

#### **6) Completion of the settling-in period**

- We consider the settling-in period to be successfully completed as soon as the child is happy to stay at the center from arrival to pick-up time.
- Last but not least: The teachers spend an awful lot of time with the children, which establishes a close bond with them. Under no circumstances do they want to become rivals for your child's affection.

##### **6.1.1 Early Settling in From June to August**

For parents who cannot undertake a settling in period from September on, we offer an extra early settling in for their children. Four children have the chance to 'settle in' and be cared for, daily from 9.15-11:30. Typically these children just need one to two weeks in September to stay for their full booking times. The Münchner Model is also used for the children who settle in from June to August.

## 6.2 *Crèche Phases*

The children enrolled at Little Daisies go through different stages. In the first two stages, the transfer of knowledge through planned daily activities comes secondary. In these stages, the children are focused on getting to know the crèche, establishing relationships with the teachers and feeling comfortable at Little Daisies. The introduction of daily activities begins in the third stage. The fourth phase ends when the child leaves the crèche. The following is an overview of the four phases a child experiences during their time at Little Daisies:

### **September-October of 1<sup>st</sup> year – Settling in phase**

- Get to know the daily routine (circle times, mealtimes, playtimes, quiet times)
- Learn to bond with a person other than their mother and father
- Learn that there are other children
- Gradually feel comfortable in the crèche

### **October-November of 1<sup>st</sup> year – Orientation phase**

- Become a group
- Find their place in the group
- Develop a preference for certain activities

### **December of 1<sup>st</sup> year-May of 2<sup>nd</sup> year – Familiarity phase**

- Activities and projects related to the five core subjects areas: language, math, arts/crafts and music, physical development, and nature and experiments. Each subject area is covered at least once a week.
- Learn more about how to interact with others socially
- Development of a basic competence in conflict resolution

### **June-August of 2<sup>nd</sup> year – Closure phase**

- Preparation to transition to the kindergarten

For children who are in a crèche for the first time, the most important “goal” is to cope with all of these stages and feel good doing so. Only once the children are comfortable are they ready to learn and be exposed to new things, a skill that is later important for the transition to kindergarten.

## 6.3 *Core Subject Areas*

After new children have successfully settled in and the first two phases have passed, we turn our attention to the five core subject areas. Each week, we offer various activities and projects that cover the five core subject areas.

The core subject areas are:

- Language and interaction
- Mathematics
- Nature and experiments
- Physical development and motor skills
- Arts and crafts, culture and music

Additional topics we cover each day include:

- Ethics
- Health

### 6.3.1 Language and Interaction

Language is a means of thinking and expressing. Children analyze their surroundings by using the words they have learned and thus form their own understanding of the world. Education in a crèche strongly supports using language to aid in the development of a young child's thought and learning processes, social interactions, and emotions. By doing this, the children's emotional well-being, creativity, and self-esteem are fortified.

Showing language skills by example, the teachers explain all actions to the children, talk to them about their emotions, and the reasons for their feelings and actions. They speak with the children as much as possible and tell the children the exact names of objects to help the younger children learn them. The younger children in the crèche are just beginning to learn to speak and to understand that objects have a particular name and that emotions can be expressed in words. That's why it's especially important for the Caterpillar children that the teachers name objects over and over again and try to help the children put their feelings into words.

Older children start to learn to talk about their thoughts and feelings and to express their observations. The children are encouraged to become good listeners and storytellers. As part of a group, they get used to listening to other children and adults, taking part in conversations and, when necessary, waiting until it is their turn to talk.

In order to support the language development, both groups use finger plays, rhymes, books and songs. In the Butterfly Group, many language and memory games are used in addition to books and songs. The language used to conduct morning circle alternates between English and German in both groups, and the same amount of material is covered in each language. Altogether, this ensures that language acquisition accompanies children throughout each day,

at all times. We focus on children's interests, which teachers pick up on and follow empathetically. Learning language is integrated into daily life in an appreciated and enjoyable way.

The teachers see constantly reflecting on and improving how they educate the children as a necessity.

Our educational program lays the foundation for learning reading and writing skills. Reading aloud and looking at books are not the only things that support this; the way we have labeled chairs, drawers and coat hooks with words and pictures also supports the process. By connecting images, objects, and the written words, the cornerstones are laid for learning reading and writing later on.

A further basis for the beginning of literacy is that children hear and listen, know that they are listened to, are allowed to talk and be talked to, be part of conversations, ask questions, and get answers. Having experienced an environment that provides this basis, the children have developed their communication skills and will easily be able to develop their reading and writing skills. All of the creative activities that we offer (finger painting, coloring, cutting with scissors, etc.) teach the eye-hand coordination also necessary for writing.

We are a bilingual (German-English) childcare center and the children are exposed to both languages all day long. To us, multilingualism is a valuable resource for the children's personal and social development. Our teaching staff is made up of fluent English speakers as well as fluent German speakers. The fluent English speakers are able to speak and understand German and vice versa, which means the children can always make themselves understood, and also enables all teachers to communicate in one of the two languages with the parents.

The children are exposed to the new language through the immersion concept. Immersion is the most successful method of language learning.

The immersion concept works as follows:

- Each teacher speaks exclusively one language with the children (one person, one language).
- The children learn the second language the way they learn their first language. We don't teach it through vocabulary lessons, but rather they learn it through osmosis as we play and interact with them in it. The teachers talk about what they are doing and what things are called, and through time and repetition, the children understand and can use the second language.

- The children are allowed to speak and answer in the language of their choice. They are not forced to use the second language

### 6.3.2 Mathematics

Our education program strives to lay the foundation for the future understanding of mathematics. The children are taught to see mathematical phenomena that turn up in everyday situations. Children's understanding of math can be enhanced in a natural way through role playing, stories, songs, sports, by imitating (counting plates aloud, for example) and providing lots of visual examples. Spatial thinking can be encouraged, even in younger children, by doing various arts and crafts.

Small mathematical activities and exercises involving the children are done every day. This can be in the process of doing another activity: "How many cookies did you bake? Let's count." Our sensory table also offers special opportunities to develop mathematical concepts. The table is filled with different materials, such as hay, peas, pinecones or sand. By playing with different containers, the children learn about quantities and volume, how to measure, pour and count. We incorporate the concepts of above and below in the Caterpillar classroom, which develops spatial awareness. Moreover, by classifying, comparing, and sorting, children start exploring objects, creatures, bodies, figures, materials and phenomena in terms of form, quantity, color and other characteristics. In the Butterfly classroom, we make charts on which the numbers 1, 2 and 3 are shown with the same number of leaves, flowers or other objects.

### 6.3.3 Nature and Experiments

We aim to help the children understand their environment and strengthen their relationship to nature and the environment through experiences and emotional connections.

The younger children get to know themselves through their environment. They experiment with various materials in the crèche and learn various physical conditions and temperatures by experiencing them with their senses. For example, they play in water and in snow, and the teachers show them how water freezes to become ice. In the sensory table, the children use their senses to compare sand with dirt or rice and experiment with spring, summer, fall and winter colors on large pieces of paper. They observe the world outside: traffic, construction sites, cars and the weather. They become familiar with ants and flies. They understand what "going home" means along with "going to the crèche," "going to the bakery" and "going to the butcher." They gradually get a feeling for their neighborhood.

The older children in the crèche increasingly learn to understand the difference between the natural world and the world created by humans, and the differences between peoples and cultures. They also learn to recognize the effects their own actions have on their immediate surroundings. Nature's biological diversity, beauty and pleasantness are pointed out to the children, as well as the need to take these into consideration when doing things and to be environmentally conscious.

To give the children the chance to experience nature, we go outside with them on a daily basis, either in our garden, to a nearby playground, or on a walk along the Isar. The older children go on an outing twice a month to the forest (Perlacher Forst) to learn more about and play in the forest.

We do various experiments with the children that match our themes and whatever season it is. In the spring, we plant seeds in our flowerbed and wait for them to grow into flowers. In the summer, we find out which objects float and which ones sink in water. The children observe how leaves fall from the trees in the fall. We make popsicles in the winter and collect rainwater in a bucket in the spring.

#### 6.3.4 Physical Development and Motor Skills

For children, movement is essential for balanced growth, development and health. In play and physical activity, children train their physical and motor condition and control their movements and fundamental motor skills. Gross and fine motor skills, as well as manual skills and hand-eye co-ordination, are developed in everyday activities. In addition to the activities offered by the teachers, the children are given time to choose physical activities and games themselves. Children are encouraged to learn to act in a self-sufficient, active, co-operative and courageous way. Physical exercise is important for the health and well-being of children, and we want them to learn to place a high value on it.

In addition to building on the close connections they have with the children, the team bases their actions and behavior on Emmi Pikler's concept of free movement and concepts from psychomotricity. They encourage and support the children as they have their own experiences. Through observation, they can identify needs and topics relevant to the children. The rooms are arranged in a way that gives each child the opportunity to repeat activities and face challenges. The Caterpillar and Butterfly sport rooms are designed so that a variety of movement landscapes can be set up. The materials are used in a thoughtful and creative way. Typically, the children have access to the sport rooms at all times.



While the younger children are busy experiencing their own body in connection to the world around them, the older children spend time using their imagination and creativity. Cardboard boxes become houses or cars, or a huge soft mattress is a swimming pool that the kids jump into from the long bench. It's possible to introduce movement-based games with simple rules (such as the popular German children's game, "Feuer, Wasser, Sturm").

Because the children are always free to go where they please within their group, or anywhere within the entire center during open times, the children naturally spread out throughout the different areas. Teachers also have the opportunity to form groups. For instance, if they want to play a game requiring the children's concentration that could be disturbed by others or if they want to do small group work. In such instances the area may be blocked off to others.

### 6.3.5 Arts & Crafts, Music and Culture

Music and other arts forms play an essential part in our educational program for the development of emotional, practical, and cognitive skills. Creativity, imagination, and self-expression in children are encouraged by painting, music, arts and crafts, theatre, dance and exercise. Through play and active experimenting with artistic activities, the children gather and process information about themselves and the things going on around them. They are encouraged to continue working on artistic projects over a series of days and to be proud of their work, as well as to show respect for the work of others. The ability to empathize and perceive, and the sense of spatial orientation are supported. Thus, the learning processes are enhanced and the children acquire competencies essential for everyday life as well as for mental processes and problem solving.

We attempt to motivate the children, every day when possible, to take up colored pencils, crayons, and paints and to create and express themselves with them. These materials are available where the children can access them independently to experiment with, as they want.

Projects specifically aimed at crèche-age children are those that, above all, let the children experience their own bodies through art with all their senses. This might involve putting shaving cream on a tabletop, and letting the children explore in it with their fingers, hands, and whole arms if they so wish. Or it might involve providing pots of finger-paints out in the yard for the children, and letting them paint their bodies and the rest of the garden around them. The goal is to allow the children's creativity to flow freely and to let them find out through experience what can be done with various materials. The creative process is above all process-oriented. The experience is the goal.

As a bilingual center, the children at Little Daisies come from different cultures. Promoting their own cultural identity along with understanding their cultural heritage is very important to us. During our parties, parents bring traditional food. Our materials are chosen to represent different cultures and ethnicities so that the children can become familiar with them. (i.e. dolls with different skin tones and books about different cultures.) In our facility, there is a natural balance of different languages and cultures. Our children respect and value each other's differences.

The children are instructed on the importance of appreciating and preserving the aesthetic and cultural value of both the natural and the man-made environments.

### 6.3.6 Ethics, Gender & Inclusion

#### 6.2.6.1 Ethics

It is important to us that we convey to the children general societal values. We begin by helping the children to develop self-respect. We build upon that and teach them to respect others, to respect society, and to respect the natural environment. The teaching of values is integrated into every situation that comes up in the crèche. It is dealt with through discussions or role-play in the Butterfly Group, and taught through example in the Caterpillar Group, thereby developing ethical thinking in the children.

These values are among those that we aim to convey: tolerance and mitigation, equality and fairness, politeness and courage, and the ability to maintain one's own identity while expressing kindness and care for others.

#### 6.2.6.2 Gender

Ethics in education also means that children of different genders recognize each other as equal and value each other's differences. Each child is unique, and we show our respect to them regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, cultural background, abilities or other individual characteristics.

We help the children develop their own identity, interests and self-awareness. To this end, we question traditional gender norms and traditions, get to know our own ideas and identity, learn to reflect on them and respect others. Diversity is the norm at Little Daisies.

Every day we give all children the equal opportunities, resources, and space to express themselves. We encourage all children to be unbiased and open-minded, to reflect on prejudices and to respect themselves as well as others.

As educators, we make an effort to be aware of our own beliefs and behavior. We reflect on them as a team and question stereotypes, we encounter, including those related to gender.

#### 6.2.6.3 Inclusiveness

We acknowledge and respect the personality and individual abilities of each child, parent and team member. Everyone has the right to be accepted for who they are

The similarities and, more importantly, differences between the children encourage them to learn from each other and are viewed as enriching.

All children have the same opportunity to participate in everyday life at the center, such as children's conferences, projects and activities. This helps us ensure equal educational opportunities long term.

Our team treats the children and families in an open, appreciative way.

#### 6.3.7 Health

Our educational program is meant to enhance the children's physical, mental and social well-being, as well as their growth and development. Positive experiences and a variety of occasions for interaction are designed to help the children become aware of their relationship with others and the environment. The ability of the children to take responsibility for their health and well-being and to act accordingly is taught in normal everyday situations. The children are encouraged to move freely and confidently in their regular environments. They also learn the basics involved in their daily hygiene and health. Toilet training is an important goal, when an individual child is ready for it. Adequate table manners and healthy eating habits are encouraged and supported. The children learn to wash their hands after going to the toilet, and to brush their teeth after meals. It is also important to show them to wipe and blow their nose, and to cough into their arm.

Learning about health includes understanding the importance of meals. The majority of our breakfast comes from the "Ökokiste," an organic food service, and is prepared by the staff. We have different healthy products for breakfast every day. On Mondays we have yogurt and muesli; on Tuesdays we have pretzels, raw vegetables and turkey; on Wednesdays, bread, cream cheese and fruit; on Thursdays, crispbread, sliced cheese and raw vegetables; and on

Fridays, vegetable sticks with dip. Our lunch is delivered by the “Kinderküche,” whose owner, nutritionist Susanne Klug, places emphasis on balanced nutrition and uses organic or high-quality regional food in her cooking. In the afternoon a nutritious snack – fruit and bread or a rice waffle– is provided by the “Ökokiste.”

At Little Daisies, children learn to accept even foods that they don’t like on their plates, and to pour water for themselves. They are encouraged to try all foods, but are not forced to eat something if they do not like it. Children can decide themselves when they have had enough, and are not required to eat everything on their plates in order to be done.

At mealtimes, children sit together in small groups with a teacher to create a family-like atmosphere at the table. They understand that mealtimes are a time to relax and socialize with others.

In addition, the children learn about manners social graces and are give the chance to practice them. This encourages the children to interact in a non-aggressive way and to develop positive emotional relationships with other people

### 6.3.8 Integrating the Core Subject Areas

Every week, the teachers offer a variety of activities to the children related to the five core subject areas described above. Ethics and health are integrated continually throughout the course of each day.

The projects in the crèche are related to the five overarching subject areas. The selection of activities and projects is based on a child’s way of experiencing their surroundings with content that will help the child’s development and ability to analyze the world.

The interests of the children are taken into consideration by the teachers to help find themes that are currently relevant to them.

Here are examples of some themes that might be covered in the crèche groups during the course of a year:

#### **September-November**

- Fall
- Wind, air
- What is light? What is heavy?
- St. Martin

#### **December-February**

- Winter (animals/clothing/activities)
- St. Nikolas, Advent, Christmas
- Learning about giving
- Carnival

- Colors

### **March-May**

- Spring
- Animals (zoo animals, farm animals)
- Easter
- Plants and flowers
- Planting seeds

### **June-August**

- Summer
- Body, body parts
- The 5 senses
- What can I do?/How can I help? (independence)

Here is an example of a monthly project:

#### **Project: Fall**

Monday: We take the children outdoors and look at the changes taking place in nature. We notice the different colors of the leaves and collect a few. At circle, the children handle the leaves and look at them closer. The colors of the leaves are spoken in both German and English and the leaves are counted. The teachers talk about fall and explain why the leaves fall from the trees. Afterwards, we sing a song about fall.

Tuesday: We color or paint large fall pictures with crayons, colored pencils, or paint brushes. Afterwards we read a book about fall together.

Wednesday: We move to music and pretend we are leaves that have just fallen from the trees. A pile of leaves lies in the middle of the circle and we have fun throwing them into the air. The music teacher sings fall songs with us and the children play drums to the music.

Thursday: We make a counting chart using chestnuts and leaves with the older children. Next to the number 1 we glue one leaf, next to the number 2 we glue two chestnuts and next to the number 3 we glue three buckwheat grains. With the younger children, we sort the leaves according to size.

Friday: In the sport room, the children are encouraged to climb the climbing frame, pretending it is a tree. We balance on a bench, noticing that it is made of wood. A huge fall storm comes long and the children lean in all directions.

As the example shows, we try to carry out the theme of the monthly project in all core subject areas. Through this comprehensive approach, the children should gradually understand that the entire world is interwoven and everything is connected. In addition, the children are exposed to a range of experiences during the week. There is something for every child to enjoy and the children can try out new things. The concept of the five core subject areas is important for the teachers because it means they cannot choose to do activities only in core areas in which they feel comfortable, rather they are challenged to plan activities in other areas as well. Should a child have no interest in an activity being offered, he or she will not be forced to participate.

This table illustrates how the core subject areas are covered over a week.

Project	Daily Component	Language	Math	Nature	Sport	Art/Music	E T H	H E A
Fall	Flexible	Naming the colors of the leaves in both languages  Book about fall	Sort leaves  Count leaves	Collect leaves  Why do the leaves fall from the trees?	Move like leaves  Balance on a wooden bench	Paint an fall picture  Sing songs about fall	I  C S	L T H
Fall	Set	Daily circle Daily book circle		Trip to Perlacher Forest twice a month	Teacher directed sport hour	Music teacher  Daily circle with singing		

#### 6.4 Transition to Kindergarten

During their time at the crèche, the children are prepared for the transition to kindergarten. There are several fieldtrips to Little Daisies Kindergarten with the crèche teachers accompanying the children and explaining the difference between the crèche and the kindergarten. In the spring, there are visits in which the crèche children visit the kindergarten.

A few weeks before the transition to the kindergarten, the crèche team begins to speak the children about the impending transition more and more often. The teachers explain to the children what a kindergarten is and what activities can take place there. Children books about this theme are read together. After that, teachers leave a lot of space for the opinions the

children have and the feelings they are experiencing. The joys of starting a new chapter in life along with the fear of leaving a familiar and trusted place are automatically discussed with the children. The topic of saying goodbye plays a large role during the transfer so that children can realize and express their feelings concerning this topic. The children who do not express themselves verbally can also become aware of their feelings during these discussions. During one-on-one time with teachers, children additional opportunities to come to terms with their impending transition. At the end of the school year, the crèche children who will start at the Little Daisies kindergarten spend an increasing number of hours at the Kindergarten over the course of a week as a pre-settling in phase.

Parents are kept informed of the transition plans and process. There are conversations with the teachers during pick up and drop-off times, parent informational evenings, and parent-teacher conferences. The team of teachers from the Little Daisies Kindergarten also gets in contact with the new parents.

At a parent informational evening for new kindergarten parents, the kindergarten teachers prepare parents for the transition. The crèche and Kindergarten teams take time to discuss all aspects of the transfer from crèche to kindergarten, also taking the feelings of the parents into careful consideration.

On the last day of the school year, there is an end of the year party and all personal property is taken home and a new step in life begins.

## 7. Quality Management

In order to constantly maintain and improve the quality of our work, we as an organization, as a team and as individuals never stop reflecting on our work or educating ourselves.

### *7.1 Staff Planning Days Curriculum Planning/ Development*

At least three times a year we have staff planning days. These are occasions for us to work on evolving our educational work and our curriculum. We introduce new pedagogical ideas, invite external trainers to join us or discuss organizational changes.

## *7.2 Reflection Rounds*

In a weekly meeting, the head of the center meets and discusses with the head of each group. In annual reviews, the leadership team sits down with each team member to discuss their work.

Every four months, the owner or a representative meets with the teachers to reflect and mutually give constructive feedback. The head of the center meets with the owner or a rep on a weekly basis.

## *7.3 Supervision*

Four times a year, a supervisor pays us a visit. She is briefed on all topics that have come up within the team and discusses the children's development, when necessary, or offers support during challenging parent-teacher conferences.

## *7.4 Participation in Continuing Education Programs*

The team participates in a range of internal continuing education programs, for instance we recently completed a program about preventing addiction. Additionally, each team member can use up to three continuing education days to pursue topics in line with their own interests.