



“Rhythm of the Day”

The Daily Nursery Routine

In the baby room, we welcome every baby and toddler with all our hearts. We try our best to give them a high quality of care based on respect, joy, and love. We know that the first seven years of a child are the foundations of their future, so that is why we are fully aware of our responsibility in the care of your child. New born babies come to the world with the need of security and to forge emotional bonds with their main carer, so at the nursery we become the baby's secondary attachment figure. Every child gradually acquires the three main faculties of their life: walking, talking and thinking, and we are here to support them. Every child comes to this world with the right to grow strong and healthy and we will support them by giving them plenty of time for free movement, play, sleep, healthy food, contact with nature and loving human connections.

Our pedagogy is based on years of experience with children and we have gathered wisdom from the Reggio Emilia Approach, the Waldorf pedagogy, and the Pikler approach.

We would like to share with you the main areas of care so you can have a sense of the experiences your child is exposed to, which nourish and support their development.

Mealtimes

At the Nursery we offer a healthy and fresh breakfast, snacks, lunch, and dinner. Meals are cooked by our nursery cook and the children together and it is an important part of our curriculum.

Mealtimes are especially important moments, as the physical body of the child is nourished and the bond between child and adult becomes stronger due to the individual attention given. As a result, the child can grow in independence, fine motor skills, and communication.

Central to the way we feed your children is the respect for their likes and dislikes, their eating style and pace.

In order to promote independence, spoons and little metal cups are given to them when they are learning to feed themselves, encouraging "good manners" when applicable.

It is a beautiful one-to-one time, and the babies tend to be very responsive, talkative, and expressive.

When we Bottle Feed a baby, we make sure we choose a quiet place and we are totally present for the baby. We make eye contact and talk to them throughout the feed, so we know if the baby needs more, a pause or more connection time.

Sleeping Times

Babies and toddlers need long hours of sleep spread throughout the day. They need to withdraw from the world, have a rest and digest the daily stimulation and learning they have experienced.

Sleep is crucial for growth, so we consider ourselves the guardians of children's sleep and we approach sleep with great care.

We respect the individual needs of each baby as much as we can. Every child has a different rhythm at home, so we slowly adapt theirs to the nursery rhythm.

We respect the way each baby goes to sleep, accompanied by the familiar items they bring from home. Each baby has a cot with their individual bedding stored in a named bag. The bedding is washed every week or more frequently if necessary.

We offer them to go to sleep a few times throughout the day: after breakfast, after lunch and in the afternoon. When a toddler is not ready to sleep, we will allow extra time for free play.

The children sleep in a warm sleeping bag in a quiet area and they fall asleep with us singing lullabies. Some will go independently but we are always present for those who need a warm touch or reassurance.

Free Play

Free Play is the vehicle for the baby's growth and learning about themselves and the world.

Babies

Babies start playing with their bodies and, while experiencing their free movement, they learn to gain control over themselves through their proprioceptive sense. The joy that comes from every little step they take feeds their will to keep trying and exploring.

We believe each baby learns to move independently from his back to crawling, to sitting, standing, and walking without our help. We do not put a baby in a position they have not reached by themselves as this would put unnecessary pressure on their body and interfere with their growth. The environment is an especially important aspect of healthy free play. We provide babies with a wide variety of toys mainly made of natural materials. We are always present in their play so they can feel secure to explore and take measured risks.

Toddlers

Toddlers' play is sensorial, physical, and will eventually become social and imaginative. They have a strong exploratory impulse which helps them to understand the world they live in. The key to healthy play is that it is always child led. The child can follow his or her impulses and desires, and this strengthens their will. They play alongside other children and use the adult as a secure base to explore. We enrich their play with actions, songs, and vocabulary. We provide a vast range of natural toys like a kitchen, dolls, books, instruments, and construction which support their development. Toddler's play is also enriched by interacting with older children at the nursery.

While playing outdoors children connect with nature, they have endless opportunities to develop their gross motor skills (walking, running, jumping...) and fine motor skills (collecting flowers, touching stones, and earth...).

Ring Time

Ring Time is an adult lead activity where songs, rhymes, gestures, and games are shared with the children. This takes place in the morning, after the morning nap.

Our ring time is part of our daily routine. Babies and toddlers are invited to our ring, but they are not forced to stay since their focus is short spanned. They are free to move around and yet; they are included in our singing. A few songs are repeated daily, as repetition helps anchor little children's learning. We wear an apron full of pockets and each child takes turns to choose one. Each pocket contains a puppet related to a nursery rhyme or a song. Children learn to wait and share, and it is a fun way to start introducing boundaries. We also play peek a boo and hand games that strengthen the child/ adult bond.

Music, rhythm, and gestures stimulate the whole of the child's being and they learn in a fun and loving way.

All activities promote the quality of Beauty, which is also cultivated during ring time. Beauty brings harmony, which helps the child develop their inner balance and centre.

Moments of care

These are special moments when the adult gives her full attention to the child:

- Changing a nappy
- Changing clothes
- Washing hands and face
- Dressing and undressing

During all these moments our work is based on the following principles:

- Respect the children pace
- Encourage their independence
- Working cooperatively: doing *with* the child, not *to* the child

The moments of care are the most precious times at the nursery. We give each child individual attention and therefore the bond with each child is strengthened. During these times, we move slowly, talk gently, and explain everything we are doing with the child. We also encourage their collaboration.

Outdoor Time

Nature is our Home and children are naturally connected to Nature. Being outdoors is a healing experience for babies and toddlers. Nature has the right level of stimulation children need; it is quiet, with soft colours, full of smell, rich in learning opportunities and it offers a variety of physical challenges in a perfect space to move freely. It also unfolds their imagination, brings children together and encourages teamwork...the list is endless.

We ensure we spend as much time outdoors as we can every day, morning and afternoon.

Babies have a designated area for them in the garden where they can enjoy playing and crawling in a safe place.

Toddlers move freely around the garden observing older children's play, connecting with animals, helping adults doing jobs, challenging themselves in our wooden structures or playing with sand. Spending time in Nature gives them the opportunity to connect with the circle of life. They notice the change of seasons and our interactions with the environment throughout the year.

The long walks to the forest give the babies an opportunity to expand their routine and be engaged in a group activity. The walk gives the toddlers the possibility to develop their walking skills and to be in awe and wonder.

Activities for Toddlers

In our baby room we have babies who crawl, who are learning to walk and older toddlers who are more engaged in nursery life. They can actively be part of the tasks that maintain the nursery life by helping to tidy up, cleaning, baking or gardening. Children need to be surrounded by adults engaged in real work. Everything we do around them should be worth imitating because children will internalise everything they see and hear and transform it through play.

We have chosen baking as the main activity for these children. While baking they are:

- Developing fine motor skills, communication skills and personal and social skills.
- Learning about boundaries and following instructions.
- Learning about real processes from mixing, baking and eating the final product.

When it comes to expanding the toddlers' abilities, we choose activities that are meaningful and have a real purpose, such as: painting a Mother's Day card planting bulbs in spring or painting pieces of wood to create Christmas decorations

Toddlers also spend time with older children a few times a week. They play together, they share the snack and on Mondays they have Music. This contact brings new challenges for our older toddlers and prepares them slowly for their next age group. It builds their confidence and resilience without compromising the security they have developed with their key person.