

Pedagogical plan of action



PLAYING & EXPLORING TOGETHER



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Introduction

True Colors childcare Rijswijk (TCR)

TCR has 7 groups, spread over 2 floors: 3 day care groups, 1 after school care group and a central play space located downstairs plus 3 day care groups and a central play space upstairs. The day care groups are all mixed age groups, made up of children of different ages ranging from 0 to 4 years. Each group contains a maximum of 12 children, supervised by 2 members of our pedagogical team. All pedagogical team members have a minimum of an MBO 3 level qualification, (intermediate vocational education) with the 'level 3F' in Dutch and a current first aid or emergency response certificate. We also work with interns and volunteers, all of whom have a Certificate of Good Conduct and are registered on the Dutch continuous screening childcare register (Persoonsregister voor continue screening). They are always supervised by our permanent staff.

Day Care Centre (DCC)

If there are fewer than 12 children in a group (either regularly or occasionally, such as during the holidays) then it is possible that the ratio calculator* will indicate that one pedagogical team member is required or that groups will be merged.

** The ratio calculator indicates, on the basis of the statutory rules and the corresponding assessment criteria used by the municipal health services, the ratio of team members to children that is required.*
<https://1ratio.nl/bkr/#/>

We may deviate from the team member/child ratio at the following times:

08.30 – 09.30

13.45 – 14.45

16.30 – 17.30

Break times are an estimate, as we allow ourselves to be guided by the children's rhythm. The pedagogical team may therefore start the break a quarter of an hour later than planned. Outside these times we do not deviate.

One of the members of the pedagogical team will be allocated as the child's mentor. They will hold the intake meeting, observe the child and do the parent teacher meetings. After the intake meeting, the child will come for several trial sessions, as described in the SRK's settling in protocol. If during the observations the mentor and their colleagues notice that the child's development differs from what we expect, they will discuss it with the parents. Together we'll make agreements on how to proceed. We can always ask for extra support with the pedagogical coach, management and our staff officers from SRK's Pedagogical Service. We can also advise parents to visit the 'Consultatiebureau' (child healthcare clinic) or 'Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin' (Child and Family Centre) for additional help.

When a child goes on to school at the age of 3 to 4 years, we give the observation forms to the child's parents. They can then decide whether or not to pass on the forms to the school. After permission from the parents, we pass on our observation forms directly to our After School Care (ASC) team when the child starts there.

After School Care (ASC)

The ASC group accommodates 10 children aged between 3 ½ and 7 years who attend the British School in Leidschenveen. At the ASC we speak Dutch with the children.

The children arrive at TCR's ASC by bus at approximately 15.30.

15.30 - 16.00 Play outside, getting a chance to let off steam or for free play in the group

16.00 - 16.30 Time for a drink and some fruit

16.30 - 17.30 Free choice: play inside or outside, take part in structured activities, free play or quiet time

17.30 - 18.30 Time for a drink and a small snack (a biscuit or breadstick), followed by play inside or outside

From the age of 7, children go to UP Esdoornstraat, an ASC centre within a stone's throw of TCR with facilities appropriate for this age group. TCR provides the transport to UP Esdoornstraat.

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When the children at the ASC play outside or in an indoor play space at the same time as children who are at the day care this is arranged between the members of the pedagogical team. The children's safety takes the highest priority. When the children at the ASC leave the centre for an outing, the Stichting Rijswijkse Kinderopvang (SRK) excursions protocol is always followed.

Holiday care for ASC children takes place at TCR. The holiday programme is tailored to the age and sometimes combined with the Day Care Centre. We communicate this to parents.

A different approach

TCR is different because we focus on internationally-oriented families with a Dutch or foreign background. The children's parents come from all over the world. Our staff often communicate with parents in English or Dutch. Many of these parents are bringing up their children to be multilingual, speaking 2, 3 or even 4 languages. Our agreement with parents is that our pedagogical team only use the Dutch language when speaking to the children.

As a pilot, we also provide bilingual (English/Dutch) childcare on two of the groups. One Dutch-speaking and 1 English-speaking pedagogical member of staff works in each group, each speaking consistently in their own language throughout the day. The language spoken depends on which group leader is present. The English-speaking leader is required to have least B2 level. Additional agreements are secured separately.

Parents bring their own culture and expectations to the day care centre, and sometimes differ from the Dutch standard. Communication about this is essential. It is important that we inform parents fully about how we do things and make efforts to understand parents' cultural background.

At TCR we have a relatively high proportion of children attend TCR for 4 or 5 full days a week. This means that our pedagogical team has more involvement in a child's upbringing, increasing the importance of their role. They can also offer support to parents in dealing with parenting issues, which is particularly appreciated by parents with a limited social network in the Netherlands.

Another cultural difference is in our approach to meals. Parents have expressed a clear preference for more substantial and varied meals than are usual in the Netherlands, ideally including a hot meal at lunch time. To reflect these wishes, we serve a hot lunch 3 times a week. Read more about our food policy in the intake file.

We offer extra activities for the children such as yoga, gym and music lessons and we have a hairdresser who visits TCR regularly. Read more about this under the 'Extra activities' header.

TCR is a place where parents, children and staff can meet one another. The importance of meeting and connecting with one another is reflected in the design of the building: its central spaces enable children to play together and engage in activities, but also for parents to meet one another.

Primary Years Programme (PYP)

Since 2019 our methodology has been inspired by the PYP, an internationally-oriented baccalaureate scheme. The scheme prepares children to enter the world as independent and confident individuals. The objective is to allow children to approach the world with an open mind, with consideration for others, for nature and for everything that lives within it.

We allow children to research and experience within the following 5 themes:

- Who we are
- Where we are in place and time
- How we express ourselves
- How the world works
- How we organise ourselves
- Sharing the planet

We cover each theme for 10 weeks, creating goals we want to aim for during this time. Based on these goals we offer activities that the children can choose to take part in, bearing in mind their age group and interests. We change the zones in the central hall to fit in with the themes in a way that is appropriate to a child's worldview. The children can explore here independently. During their development, children work on various skills. Within PYP, we distinguish the following skills:

Social skills: The children learn to cooperate, resolve conflicts and respect each other.

Communication skills: The children increase their vocabulary, listen to each other, use non-verbal communication and are able to express their ideas and feelings.

Increasing independence: The children develop their fine and gross motor skills, learn to organise and to follow and recognise routines.

Research and thinking skills: The children learn to solve problems, formulate questions, to observe and analyse.

In addition to the children's skills, we also examine their personality and behaviour. In PYP this is known as the 'student profile'. The illustration shows which traits the children can demonstrate; we praise them when they demonstrate these skills.



Extra activities

At TCR we believe it is important to offer something extra. Every week the following activities are therefore on offer, provided by external teachers:

- Music for children aged 0 - 4
- Yoga for children aged 2 - 4
- Gym for children aged 2 - 4
- Swimming lessons for children aged 2½ - 4.

In addition, we work with a number of 'voorleesoma's', grandmothers who come to read to the children once a month; the children's hairdresser visits once every 2 months and the team members carry out extra 3+ activities for the children who no longer need to sleep after lunch and who are due to start school soon.

Vision Statement

Stichting Rijswijks Kinderopvang has a vision statement for their daycare centers. As TCR we secured our additional pedagogy in this document.

TCR's vision statement reads:

“True Colors is the best and most colourful place in The Hague region for children to develop into social and independent global citizens, while providing a safe and warm welcome for their parents.”

The words describing our greatest core values are connection, colourful and passionate.

Our 4 basic objectives within our pedagogical vision are:

- Offering **emotional security**. Emotional security contributes to a child's wellbeing: if a child feels safe, he is free to explore and develop.
- Promoting **personal competence**. Helping children to discover their talents and interests and helping them to establish and maintain a positive self-image.
- Promoting **social competence**. Enabling children to get the most out of playing together as part of a group.
- Helping children internalise **morals and values**. Teaching children the boundaries and what others expect of them.

Independent exploration

As part of our pedagogical vision, we operate with an 'open door' policy, offering the children regular opportunities to leave their own group area to interact with other children and encounter different learning materials and activities.

Spending the whole day in a single enclosed space creates an unnatural situation. Children need the freedom to explore and investigate. Our open door policy allows our pedagogical team to give the children regular opportunities to discover the environment outside the group area by playing with children from other groups either outside, in one of the central spaces or in the splash room.



Basic goals for our vision

Under the heading 'Vision' above, we discussed the 4 basic goals contained within our vision. These 4 basic objectives are described in more detail below.

1. Supervising children in a climate of emotional safety

All the actions of our pedagogical team have the basic aim of offering the child a sense of safety. Safety is not merely a factor in a child's individual wellbeing; it forms the basis for all other development. Children who feel they are in a safe and familiar environment have the confidence to adopt an open approach, to make contact and to take risks. To achieve this, our pedagogical team deliberately fosters a bond between the child and the individual team members. The pedagogical team member creates this bond by noticing the signals communicated by the child (sensitivity) and responding to them in the right way (responsiveness). This gives the child the sense that the other person understands them and is considerate of their feelings and wishes. A predictable daily routine, the layout of the space and the presence of other children and staff who are familiar also help to create a sense of security.

How we work

Interaction with the children at the DC

- We follow a structured daily routine. This creates safety and security for children.
- All our pedagogical team apply the same rules. This consistent approach gives children clear boundaries and helps create emotional safety.
- When talking to the children, our pedagogical team members attempt, where possible, to give the child the appropriate language to describe what they are feeling (happiness, sadness).
- According to the law, children 0 years old have 2 familiar faces and for children 1-13 years old 3 familiar faces in the week.
- Each child has their own mentor in the group. The mentor is one of the permanent members of the pedagogical team in the group. The mentor will hold an intake meeting with the parents, observe the child and will meet the parents each year to discuss the observation form.
- The pedagogical team member on duty also gives their attention to each parent. This creates a sense of familiarity and trust for the child and the parent. They also contribute to this sense of familiarity by giving the parent detailed information about the child's day, for example activities they participated in, what they played with and the other children played with, as well as the standard information about nap times and what they ate.
- Pedagogical team members respond sensitively to the children, fostering the pedagogical relationship between the child and the staff member.
- Whenever possible, we keep each of the materials and play areas in the same location in the central play space to help create emotional safety for the children.
- During playing time, the pedagogical team members play with the children in the various play areas and supervise the children's play. This approach helps the children to explore the possibilities fully.

- When a child arrives and when it leaves to go home, the pedagogical team member gives her full attention to that child, letting the child see that she is pleased to see them.
- Our pedagogical team not only takes account of the needs of the group of children, they ensure each child receives individual attention, for example when changing a nappy, during meals and at snack or drink times, when putting the child down for a nap, when it is upset and needs comforting and during one-to-one activities.
- The presence of pedagogical team members in various play areas stimulates the children to play there. Engaging the children in different play areas creates a sense of order in the play space as a whole.
- We decide on an individual basis when each child is ready to join the toddlers in the central play space.



Babies (0-1 Year):

- Each of the group areas has a special quiet corner for babies.
- Each day we offer opportunities for the babies to participate in exploratory play together.
- Pedagogical team members foster a relationship of trust with each baby by responding sensitively to the baby.
- The pedagogical team member mirrors the baby's actions by imitating them, for instance, by copying their facial expressions or the sounds they make.
- The pedagogical team member makes regular eye contact with the baby.
- The pedagogical team member talks to the baby about what she is doing so that it knows what is happening and uses varying intonation.
- Pedagogical team members regularly give individual attention to each baby. They regularly hold each baby to give them a cuddle or soothe them.
- It is important for babies not to see too many different faces. We aim to ensure that babies under the age of 1 will always see one of the 2 permanent faces. Unfortunately, we cannot always guarantee this during holidays or when a pedagogical team member is ill.
- Babies are given their bottle or are breast-fed by their mothers in a quiet corner to ensure they get the time and attention they need.

Interaction with parents (and other carers) of children at the DC

We ask parents to:

- Read the information on the screens showing which team members are working that day. These are located at the entry to the central space on the 'photo tree' and on the television screens. Parents receive the timetable and menu for hot meals via the True Colors app a week in advance, so they can tell their child what to expect.
- Make sure they allow enough time and give the necessary attention to bringing and collecting their children.
- Bring and collect their children at the appointed times (before 9.30 and after 16.30), so that the daily programme is not interrupted. If this is not possible, they should inform member of our pedagogical team.
- Make time to attend an annual interview to discuss your child's progress. This enables us to agree with you on our care and supervision of your child wherever possible.

Corresponding PYP skills

Within the PYP themes, we also support the children's sense of emotional security. By increasing their social skills, children become more self-confident and feel more secure within the group. We stimulate them to make contact with each other and give positive feedback when this goes well.

In addition, by increasing independence, we are improving children's self-reliance. They learn routines and we let the children do as much as possible themselves. We give them positive feedback when they succeed, giving them more self-confidence and a feeling of security.

2. *Helping children to acquire self-knowledge and achieve or maintain a positive self-image (personal competence)*

We give every child the opportunity to try out new things, appropriate to their stage of development, pace and temperament. This allows children to discover their own potential and discover their own limits. We also encourage children to develop flexibility and creativity. This helps them to establish a positive self-image.

Explorative play encourages the children to look for solutions to all kinds of challenges before seeking help. Within safe boundaries, we allow them to discover their own abilities and limits before we intervene. We believe in the importance of learning through experience. Our aim is to teach children to judge for themselves what they can safely do in a given situation.

How we work

Interaction with the children

- Children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves, to climb up and down the stairs, to butter their own bread and to use the toilet. We praise them when they try to do these things independently.
- Children are allowed to decide which activity they want to do while playing in the central space. Our pedagogical team guides their choices to ensure that they experience a variety of activities.
- Children need to be given the opportunity to make mistakes and find their own solutions to problems, where necessary assisted by our pedagogical team.
- When we observe the child doing something positive, we mention and praise this.
- We teach the children that when they are unable to do something, they should ask for help from our pedagogical team and the other children.



Interaction with parents (and other carers)

- We encourage parents to respond positively to any activities their child takes part in.
- Parents are asked to foster their children's independence at home as well, e.g. by toilet training and encouraging them to get themselves dressed and undressed and to help prepare their own food (a good place to start is buttering their own bread).

Corresponding PYP skills

Within the PYP themes, we also support children's personal competences. They get to know routines and we allow the children to do as much as possible themselves. We praise them when they succeed, resulting in more self-confidence and increasing their personal competences. In addition, we develop their research and thinking skills, teaching the children to solve problems themselves.

Outdoor play areas

The outdoor play area and rooftop gardens at TCR have been designed using natural materials to allow for outdoor play in a natural environment. We try to go outside with the children every day. To ensure we can do so even when it rains, we provide rain capes and rubber boots for the children and umbrellas and rubber boots for our staff.

Excursions

The children leave their group area each day to play in the hallway or outside on a daily basis. Sometimes the children go on an outing near the child care centre. We always follow SRK's excursions protocol. These outings take place whenever the opportunity arises or go on planned excursions. We give parents a copy of the excursions protocol during the intake meeting.



3. Helping children to benefit from playing together as part of a group (social competence)

We believe that the added value of interacting in a group and exploratory play with others is that it gives children the opportunity to get to know and show respect for other people and to assert themselves. During these activities, we foster these skills by helping one another, tidying up and celebrating special occasions. The emphasis TCR places on working and playing together is also reflected in interaction between the different groups and with the music, gym and yoga teachers.

Participating in different group situations outside the confines of their own group teaches the children to deal with different types of behaviour and to experience the response their own behaviour provokes in others. Our aim is to make the child aware of this and teach them to deal with these consequences proactively and to understand their own role in this. Exploratory play with others broadens the child's social development by bringing them into contact with children and staff from other groups.

How we work

Interaction with the children

- Our approach of letting the children resolve conflicts themselves where possible teaches children how to function as part of a group. Our pedagogical team shows the right way to behave in a group and while playing together so that children can imitate this. We correct inappropriate behaviour by explaining why this behaviour is not appropriate and the effect it has on others. To turn this into a positive learning experience, pedagogical team members then explain to the child how it can express its frustration in a different way. We reward appropriate behaviour.
- The members of our pedagogical team are role models for the children. As we believe children should not interrupt a conversation, this also applies in reverse: when a member of our pedagogical team is having a conversation with a child, other adults must also wait until that conversation has finished before they speak.
- Thanks to TCR's mixed age groups (with children aged from 0 to 4 years), younger children learn from older children and older children learn to be considerate of younger children. We can also place siblings in the same group.

Interaction with parents (and other carers)

- We believe that it benefits children if parents arrive early enough to allow time for a proper conversation with one of our pedagogical team on arrival and collection. It is also important to say goodbye to the child quickly and clearly, both when parting from the parent in the morning and from the pedagogical team member in the evening.
- We believe that it is in the child's interests if both pedagogical team members and parents set a good example. This is why we think it is so important to discuss the common approach we should adopt with respect to your child.

Corresponding PYP skills

Within the PYP themes, we also support the children's social competences. By improving social skills, the child becomes more self-confident and feels more secure in the group. We encourage children to interact and praise them if they do so successfully.

In addition, we work to improve communication skills. Children learn to talk about their ideas and feelings using verbal and non-verbal communication. They learn to listen to others.



4. Teaching children morals and values

Morals and values are given a high priority at TCR. Internalising morals and values forms part of a child's moral development. Many of the situations a child encounters in the group and during exploratory play with others offer opportunities to learn morals and values (for example, when conflicts arise or a child experiences pain or distress). The responses of our pedagogical team help the children to distinguish what is acceptable and what is not. Our society includes many different cultures. Rather than concentrating on differences, our aim is to show that all children are equally important.

How we work

Interactions with the children

- We believe that it is important for children that we have clear rules about acceptable behaviour in the group and during their activities. It is important for the rules to be repeated frequently. These include rules about contact between children such as taking toys from another child or comforting each other.
- Our pedagogical team set an example to the children in the way they apply morals and values and they should be aware of this, both when dealing with the children and in their interactions with colleagues and parents.
- Children learn to wait their turn.
- Pedagogical team members set an example to the children by taking responsibility for their actions.
- The children are involved in looking after plants and animals.
- Both the children and members of the pedagogical team keep their word. This makes situations predictable for the children, creating trust.
- If a child forgets what they promised to do, we remind them of it.
- At specified times in the day, the children have their hands and faces washed. Where possible, our pedagogical team allow the children to try to do this themselves before helping them.
- At lunch, drink time and snack time, our pedagogical team regularly offers the children different foods and drinks to allow them to experience new tastes and introduce variety, for example by serving cooked meals.
- Pedagogical team members encourage children to taste foods and drinks that are unfamiliar.
- The children also learn morals and values during the extra activities we offer.

... with parents (and other carers)

At TCR we try to accommodate parents' wishes relating to morals and values from other cultures whenever possible. We also expect parents to show respect for the morals and values that we at TCR consider important, for instance:

- At TCR we serve a cooked meal 3 times a week.
- When you bring your child to TCR and collect them, please ensure there is a clear handover of responsibility so that it is clear to the child who is in charge.
- We would appreciate your cooperation with our policy that it is important for the children to go outside whatever the weather conditions.
- Parents are requested to use the overshoes available at the entrance. The children in the upstairs groups should go upstairs without putting on overshoes or taking off their shoes to prevent accidents on the stairs.

Corresponding PYP skills

Within the PYP themes, we also support the development of the children's morals and values. This is evident throughout all the skills we help the children develop. For social skills and communication skills, we work on what you say to someone else and how you say it. For increasing independence, the children learn about the routines we use, about hygiene, etc... In research and thinking skills, children explore their limits and what is and is not acceptable.



Miscellaneous

Extra days / Exchange days

Parents can request an exchange day or an extra day via the True Colors app.

Exchanging a day takes place according to the policy agreed by SRK. A day when the child does not attend can be exchanged for a different day, provided the child/staff ratio in the group permits it. Parents can request this using the True Colors app.

You can also request extra days using the True Colors app. These will be allocated by the pedagogical team member if permitted by the team member/child ratio. The extra day is charged according to the relevant SRK rate.

Both exchange days and extra days can only be requested in the child's usual group.

Interns / volunteers

Before a volunteer or intern starts work with us, we first request a Certificate of Good Conduct (VOG). As soon as we receive this, we introduce them to the parents and children.

Interns' tasks depend on their course and course year. This may include organising activities and carrying out personal care for the children. The pedagogical team members remain responsible for the group and the children at all times. An intern is always allocated to 1 group and 1 permanent supervisor.

Volunteers support the pedagogical team, for instance in activities related to reading out loud, activities for over-3s (3+) and as extra support during excursions. Volunteers do not carry out any personal care tasks.