

Pedagogical Plan

Childcare
centre

True Colors Delft



CONTACT AND CONNECT

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1. Introduction

True Colors Delft (TCD) is located on the Technical University (TU) campus. TCD works closely together with the International School Delft (ISD), which is located at the same address. TCD has 5 childcare groups and 2 out-of-school care groups. Within the daycare we work with vertical groups. By 'vertical' we mean that children between the ages of 0-4 are grouped together. A vertical group has a maximum of 12 children. The out-of-school care group has space for 20 children between the ages of 4-12 years.

2. A different approach

TCD differentiates from other Stichting Rijswijkse Kinderopvang (SRK) childcare centres, as is True Colors Rijswijk (TCR), by the high number of international children. Parents come from abroad and often do not speak Dutch well, or at all. The pedagogical team therefore often communicates with the parents in English. The children are frequently brought up speaking two and sometimes even three or four languages.

Bilingual

TCD offers a bilingual approach towards the children. To make sure that the children feel safe and know the structure in this bilingual approach, we have teachers who only speak their assigned language with the children. I.e. we have teachers who only speak English with the children, and teachers who only speak Dutch with the children.

For children who are being brought up with a language other than English or Dutch, we work with pictures of activities, so that they still know what is about to happen. This method is used in particular during the settling-in period, after which time the child will have picked up essential words of the new languages.

Research has shown that a child is able to learn several languages at the same time. We, therefore, encourage parents and guardians to speak their native language with their child. This enables children to learn new languages on the foundation of the structure and grammar of the first language.

Parents sometimes have expectations for childcare based on what they know from their country of origin. This may differ greatly from the way things are done in the Netherlands. It is therefore important that we inform parents about how things work within the Dutch childcare system, but also to be open to good ideas from other countries. Listening and showing our understanding are both very important.

A relatively high number of children attend TCD for 4 or 5 whole days per week. The role of the pedagogical team in their upbringing is therefore greater and more important. We can also play an important part providing additional support raising the children, where parents have a limited social network.

Another difference in culture is with respect to meals. A large section of our parents have indicated that they would appreciate more extensive and varied meals and preferably a hot lunch. We therefore provide a hot lunch every day of the week.

On the other hand, TCD is also a normal childcare centre where a pedagogical team cares for children and stimulates them on their journey towards becoming independent individuals. In spite of its differences with other childcare centres, TCD also works within the SRK pedagogical vision.

3. TCD Pedagogical Vision

In drawing up our pedagogical vision, we took inspiration from different streams of thought in the pedagogical field. The vision of Reggio Emilia reflects in many aspects the way we see children ('child image') and how we think about nurturing and developing children.

A Our child image

From the start, children have their own ideas and emotions but they do not yet have the physical and cognitive opportunities to express these ideas. For this, they therefore depend on the support of their carers. Every child is different and has its own needs and interests. In order to meet these needs, we believe it is important to discover what the children know, feel and think, by listening to them and observing them.

B Nurturing aims

Safety and security

We want children to feel safe with our teachers and in the group with the other children. Only then will a child play and go off to discover. This is why we place considerable attention on reacting sensitively to the signal a child gives.

Character development and independence

Giving children the room to discover for themselves, to do and to play, increases self-confidence and enables them to learn who they are. Ultimately, this will have a positive effect on their self-confidence and self-image. We place the emphasis on the process and not on the product.

Social and emotional development

At the child care centre, children learn to wait their turn, help each other, work together during play, and to celebrate together. We pay considerable attention to emotions that certain situations might invoke, and discuss these together. This way, the children learn how to deal with these emotions in themselves and to respect them in others.

Passing on norms and values

Values such as equality, affection, caring and respect for each other and each other's culture and background are important to us. This involves helping one another, listening to each other, singing together, dancing and laughing, and learning to respect equipment, nature and everything that lives. We pass this on to the children through 'modelling' (setting a good example) and by talking and explaining a lot.

C Pedagogical vision and 'Third Culture Kids'

Many of the children who come to the child care centre have come to the Netherlands from a different culture. They have had to get used to a different environment, different people and different customs. The way in which young children deal with these kinds of changes depends completely on their temperament and ability to adjust. The wellbeing and further development are influenced by the extent to which the environment and the carer align to this. In this the parent or guardian is the main player. After all, they know their child best! This is why we believe close cooperation with parents and guardians is extremely important.

We work with the themes that are used within the Primary Years Program (PYP). This programme is used within the ISD and makes the transition for toddlers to school easier. PYP is an experience-based programme in which children learn by experiencing.

Contact and connect are the key words of our vision. In our childcare centre, we are inspired by the experience of nature. We express this by working with the four elements: earth, water, air and fire. These elements not only play a role in the child's development outdoors, but are also important inside, in their living and playing environment. The four seasons also incorporate the four elements and these, in turn, are reflected in our inside and outside spaces.

We translate **fire** in the child's social development by offering warmth, security and safety. This can be achieved on different levels: psychological warmth can be experienced through attention, security, being seen, cuddling and having fun. It can be experienced physically through the way in which the room is furnished; we use soft materials, warm colours and diffused lighting. There is an easy chair for feeding or comforting a child. Warmth and heat can physically be experienced when we eat our hot meal. The story-telling corner is filled with soft, warm cushions and an easy chair where the children can gather round for a story, for example. We also translate fire into the sunlight, which can be played with both indoors and out, using the magic of light and shadow, or glass features. The bedrooms are also decorated with soft colours and materials.

Water has its place in the social-emotional development by teaching the child to adapt, be flexible and to connect with others. This flexibility is reflected in the centre's spaces, the way care is offered and with the children. The classrooms can be adapted to accommodate the various age groups and activities. There is also a choice of different hours and weeks of care. Flexibility is a prerequisite with children. Each child has their own rhythm, preferences and wishes. We offer the child rest and also encourage them to move in the numerous inviting activities.

Water is reflected in our inside and outside spaces by the plants which we water with our little watering cans. We have a small aquarium with fish we can look after and which we will use to learn about creatures that live in water. We also have musical instruments that we can make rain sounds with.

Outside, the children can play in the rain, shelter under a roof and jump in puddles. The children are included in activities such as washing up, wiping down the furniture and washing the windows. They can hang up the washing in the garden and also make a little boat of leaves or bark to sail.

We offer the children **earth** by literally and figuratively providing them with ground under their feet. Everything has a fixed place in the centre and tidying up is one of the recurring elements within the daily rhythm. Toys can always be found in the same place in the same cupboard. Predictability in everything we do is the ground rule for the way we work. We are clear and consequent in our use of rules and boundaries. There are clearly defined playing areas inside. Outside is also a good place to eat what the soil and fruit bushes provide.

We translate **air** into the children's experience of wind, scents and sky. Playing wind instruments also involves the movement of air, as does dancing with floating ribbons. The garden is filled with the scent of flowers, with many plants which attract butterflies, and inside we use lavender oil to sooth fretful babies. Air is part of being able to sleep outside in one of the little outdoor beds. This corner is easily accessible from the centre and is in full view. When we jump, we are also 'free from the earth' and there is plenty of space for imaginative play which form an important part of our activities programme. Through imaginative play, the child develops the ability for abstract thought and logical reasoning.

The theme table has a prominent place in the hall. There is the possibility to sow seeds, water plants and make sandy mud pies both inside and outside in the garden.

To make going outside as easy as possible, each group can step straight from their classroom into the garden.

D Settling in

Two weeks before the starting date, the teachers will make an appointment with the parents for an intake interview. In this interview they set a few dates for the child to settle in. We start with a couple of hours and build that up. Have faith! Some children need more time than others before they completely are safe and settled. Do not lose faith in your child and the teachers. They are the professionals and they are there to support you and your child.

E Collaboration with the International School Delft

The International School Delft (ISD) is located at the same address as TCD. Together we will provide continuous learning opportunities for children aged 0 - 12 years. As well as regular childcare, TCD also provides the out-of-school care. Both the ISD and TCD attach great importance to experience-based learning. ISD offers the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) that prepares pupils to become active participants in a lifelong journey of learning. PYP focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside.

At True Colors Delft we work on the same skills as the ISD does, only then for children aged 0-4 years, for instance gross motor skills, sharing, and cooperation. We also work with the same themes:

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

When children turn 3 and are going to ISD, when they turn 4 years old, the teachers already go with them to the school. To show them how it looks like, to meet the teachers and the children in order to make the transition easier for them. Of course we also fill in the transition form from the nursery to the ISD.

H Development of the children

When a child starts at True Colors Delft, one of the teachers of the group will be assigned to be the mentor. She/he will fill in the observation forms which we use to watch the development of the children. The mentor discusses this form with the parents after the settling in period (3 months) and twice a year. If he/she notices a child's development is different to what we would expect, he/she discusses this with her/his colleagues and, if necessary, with the manager or a member of staff from the SRK Pedagogical Work team and, of course, with the parents. We also advise parents to visit the "Consultatiebureau" or Centrum voor Jeugd en gezin" for further help.

I Behaviour management

At True Colors Delft (TCD), we focus on the positive behaviour of children. We compliment them on their accomplishments and social behaviour. We focus considerable effort on preventing misbehaviour. We do this by setting an example, keeping a close eye on the children as they play, and by providing them with the right facilities and surroundings in which to enjoy themselves, so that there is no need for conflict.

If a conflict arises, our behaviour management policy is inspired by the principles of restorative practices. Both TCD and International School Delft work with this method. The key idea behind restorative practices is to look at the behaviour or misbehaviour and understand the reasons behind the actions. Once the reasons for the actions have been understood, we can begin to look at who has been affected by this behaviour, how they have been affected and what we can do to restore or repair the damage that has been done.

In this way, the children begin to understand their emotions of being hurt or angry. They also learn to take responsibility for their actions and, together with the teacher and other children, they learn new ways of solving problems together. Below is an example of how this may work when dealing with two children, where we have seen one taking the other's toy:

First, the teacher sits down with both children. She takes time to comfort the 'victim' and makes sure they are given the opportunity to tell their story and talk about their own emotions. The teacher asks questions and makes comments such as: "What happened? How do you feel about this? I can see that this has made you cry." Then, the 'offender' is given the opportunity to express why they 'committed the offence', and to share their feelings about the incident. The teacher asks questions and makes comments such as: "What happened? How do you feel about this? Look at <the other child> and how they feel about it."

Once this has been done, the offender and the victim (with the help of the teacher) are given the opportunity to come up with a way of repairing the harm done. The teacher asks questions such as: "So you wanted to play with the toy. But she was playing with it first. What can we do to fix this problem?" The result may be to get another toy, or that the 'offender' offers a simple apology. The apology may take whatever form the child prefers: it may be a handshake, for example, a hug or a "sorry."

The main idea is that both parties are happy with the solution, agree to it, and resume playing with no feelings of resentment or isolation. The relationship is restored, both the victim and the offender have learned something new and are able to put the incident behind them. The children learn to be aware of their own and each other's emotions and to express themselves verbally.

In addition to this method of restorative practices, in other cases of misbehaviour the children are disciplined by the teacher. She calls the child over, kneels down next them and makes eye contact. She explains what behaviour she would like to see, rather than focussing on the misbehaviour. For example: *"Could you please play with the cars on the floor, instead of throwing them."* If the child is upset while being disciplined, the teacher first helps them calm down. She acknowledges their emotions and tells them it's ok. In an emotional state, children are unable to understand the message we are trying to give about their misbehaviour. After talking to the child, the teacher checks that they got the message and that the problem has been solved.

In extreme cases and/or if the misbehaviour is repeated, we use the 'time-out' method. In every classroom, we have a place where a child can sit down and think about their misbehaviour. The time they sit there, is their age in minutes, e.g. if the child is 2 years old, they sit there for 2 minutes. After the time-out, the teacher talks to the child about why they were given a time-out, how they felt and what behaviour we would like to see from them. We always end with a big hug and/or an apology. The relationship is restored, and the child has had the chance to think and talk about their actions.

4. Supporting children within an environment of emotional security

Everything our teachers do is based on creating a sense of security. Security not only contributes to a child's wellbeing, it also forms the basis for other aspects of personal development. When a child feels safe and in familiar surroundings, they are more able to open up, make contact and experiment. This is how the deliberate actions of our teachers are able to create a close bond between the teacher and the child. This close bond is formed by the teacher picking up any signals the child gives (sensitivity) and reacting appropriately (responsiveness). This approach ensures the child gets the feeling that the other person understands them and is taking them seriously. A predictable daily routine, the classroom furnishings and the presence of familiar classmates and teachers also contribute to providing a sense of security.

Our approach

Interaction with children

- We work with a structured daily routine that offers the children security and stability.
- Our pedagogical team not only focusses on the group as a whole, they also recognise the needs of the individual child during changing times, at snack and mealtimes, at bedtime, at times of sadness, and listening to stories about experiences outside of school.
- Our pedagogical team all follow the same rules. This provides the children with clarity and supports emotional security.
- Our pedagogical team specifically name a child's feelings, such as joy or sadness, as much as possible during communication.
- We strive to use as many permanent staff as possible to ensure there is always a confidante available. In the context of the four-eyes principle, a child in the childcare centre will never be alone with just one teacher.
- A fixed timetable will enable you and your child to know exactly which teacher will be present that day.
- The teacher will give undivided attention to each child on entering and leaving the class. She will show she is glad to see each child.
- The teacher will also pay attention to each parent. This gives each child and parent a feeling of familiarity. Giving extended information on the child's sleeping and eating behaviour, telling which activities have been done and what and with whom the child played, all contribute to this.
- Our pedagogical team reacts sensitively to the children which improves the relationship between the child and the teacher.
- Sometimes our pedagogical team will join in with the children during the different activities and support the children during their games. This enriches the children's play.
- The materials and play corners have a permanent place within the group to support the emotional safety of the children.

Babies

- There is a play pen for babies in the group classrooms. Babies can also wander around in the group classroom. In a vertical group, the older children learn to look out for the babies.
- A trusting relationship between the baby and teacher is encouraged by the teacher reacting sensitively to the baby.
- Mirroring: the teacher imitates the baby by copying the facial expressions or sounds the baby makes.
- The teacher makes regular eye contact with the baby.
- The teacher names the actions she carries out with the baby so the baby knows what is happening, and she uses different intonations.
- The teacher regularly gives the babies individual attention. She will often hold the babies in order to cuddle and rock them.

Collaboration with parents (and other carers/guardians)

We ask parents to:

- Give time and attention when dropping off and picking up their children.
- Drop off or pick up their children outside the daily programme times, or ask the teacher for another time to discuss matters when there will be sufficient time for the child.
- Make time for a conversation twice a year to discuss the observations of your child. This enables us to align the care and support for your child with your wishes as much as possible.



5. Encouraging children to get to know themselves and have or develop self-esteem (personal skills)

Each child has the opportunity and space to experiment with their possibilities according to their developmental phase, speed and temperament. This teaches them their own possibilities and boundaries. The children are also stimulated to develop flexibility and creativity. This contributes to forming a positive sense of self-worth in the children.

The children are challenged to first try things themselves in all sorts of areas. We do not get involved immediately, but initially let the children experience what they can and can't yet do, within acceptable boundaries. We attach great importance to experience-based learning. We want to teach children to assess acceptable risks for themselves.

Our approach

Interaction with children

- Children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves, put on and take off their shoes, butter their bread and go to the toilet. We compliment them when they try to do these things themselves.
- Children may choose which activity they want to do. They are supported in this by the teacher to make sure they make a varied choice.
- Children should get the chance to make mistakes and try to find solutions to problems, the teachers will support them in this if necessary.
- We name and compliment the child's positive actions.
- We teach the children to ask the teacher and other children for help if they can't do something.
- In the context of the four-eyes principle, a child will never be alone with one teacher in the child care centre.



Collaboration with parents (and other carers/guardians)

- We ask parents to give positive reactions to the children's development.
- We ask parents to stimulate the children's independence at home, for instance when getting dressed and undressed, preparing food (buttering their bread), falling asleep by themselves in their own bed and becoming potty trained.

Outdoor play area

At TCD we have filled the outdoor play area with natural materials (natural outdoor play). There is a separate baby terrace where the babies can play outside. We endeavour to go outside every day with the children.

We have arranged that we can also go outside, even if it is raining. We buy Wellington boots for both the pedagogical team and the children and rain capes for the children and umbrellas for the pedagogical team.





6. Encouraging children to benefit from playing together in a group (social skills)

We see getting to know and respecting others and standing up for yourself as having added value in a group. These skills are stimulated within the group by helping each other, tidying up toys and celebrating special occasions. TCD feels that, as well as working within the child's own group, collaboration with other groups and the International School Delft provides important additional contacts.

The children learn to cope with different behaviours within the various group combinations and see how their behaviour elicits particular reactions in others. We want to give children insight and teach them to consciously cope with the consequences, so they become aware of their own role. Collaboration with the International School also broadens social development. We celebrate parties together and children aged 3+ can visit Group 1.

Our approach

Interaction with children

- By initially solving conflicts on their own, children learn to behave within a group. Teachers demonstrate how to act in a group, so the children can imitate them. Undesirable behaviour is corrected by explaining why it is undesirable and the effects it can have on others. After this correction, the incident is concluded in a positive way for the child. The pedagogical team explains to the child how they can express their displeasure in a different way. Positive behaviour is praised.
- The pedagogical team sets an example for the children. We believe it is important that a child waits if others are talking. This also applies to adults: if a teacher is talking to a child, other adults must also wait until they have finished.
- Because we work with vertical groups (0-4) at TCD, the younger children learn from the older children and the older children learn to take the younger children into account. Siblings can also be put into the same group.

Collaboration with parents (and other carers/guardians)

- We believe it is important for the child that parents make time to ensure a good hand-over. Also, that the child is given the time and space to round off the day at the childcare centre before going home.
- We believe it is important for the child that both the pedagogical team and parents set an example. With this in mind, we particularly value talking to you about our approach with respect to your child.



7. Teaching children values and standards

Values and standards are important to us. Integrating values and standards is part of the child's moral development. Within the group there are many instances in which these can be learned (e.g. conflicts, pain and sadness). The children experience the boundaries of 'good' and 'bad' through the pedagogical team's reactions. Society is made up of many different cultures. We aim to demonstrate that all children are of equal worth, and that this is more important than any differences they may have.

Our approach

Interaction with children

- We believe it is important that it is clear to the children which rules apply to the group: what is allowed and what is not allowed. Repeating these rules is important. It is also about the rules that apply between children, such as taking away toys or cuddling/comforting each other.
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- Our pedagogical team set the example in instilling values and standards and should be aware of this in their dealings with the children, colleagues and parents.
- Children learn to wait their turn.
- Our pedagogical team set an example in taking responsibility.
- Children are encouraged to care for plants and animals (in the garden, for example).
- Arrangements agreed by children and the pedagogical team are adhered to: agreed is agreed! Say what you mean, and mean what you say. This gives the children structure and security.
- If a child forgets an agreement, they are reminded of it.
- The children's hands and faces are washed at regular times during the day, where the pedagogical team gives the children as much chance as possible of trying to do it themselves.
- During both lunch and other eating and drinking times, the pedagogical team regularly offer the children new products with different tastes.
- The pedagogical team encourages children to at least taste food and drinks that are new to them.
- The children also learn to deal with values and standards during our extra activities such as toddler gym, yoga and music lessons.

Collaboration with parents (and other carers/guardians)

At TCD we aim to incorporate parents' wishes regarding values and standards from other cultures as much as possible. Having said this, we also expect understanding from parents for the values and standards we find important at TCD. For example:

- We offer a hot meal every day at TCD in response to parents' requests.
We email the menu in advance.
- We ask you to hand-over/take responsibility for your child when you drop them off or pick them up, so that there is no confusion about who is in charge.
- We ask understanding for the fact that we believe it is important to go outside in all weathers.
- On entering the building, we ask parents to use the overshoes provided.

8. A typical day in our after-school care centre

When a child starts at the after school care, the teachers make appointments with the parents about the settling in period. Usually the children come one time before the starting date, although some of them just start immediately. This is also depending on the child and on what parents want.

On Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, the children of both Jaffalaan and Nieuwelaan, first have a drink of water at their own location and are offered a choice of different kinds of fruit, after which they go to play outside. Later, they are offered a cracker with a selection of healthy spreads. There is then time for free play, or children take part in a structured activity. The children play in the after-school area, in the hall or outside.

On Wednesdays and Fridays, when both after school groups are at Jaffalaan, the children also eat lunch at the after-school care centre.

9. Cooperation with Schatkist

During the holidays, TCD works together with Schatkist. The childcare during the holiday period is provided at Schatkist because TCD has fewer children during the holidays and less space. The TCD teachers help put together the holiday programme there. Together, staff comes up with a theme and plans the activities and excursions. During the holidays, the children from TCD should be dropped off and picked up at Schatkist by their parents. For the children's emotional security, the TCD teacher is present every day at the Schatkist holiday care.

10. Excursions

The children sometimes go on an excursion in the neighbourhood, in accordance with the Stichting Rijswijkse Kinderopvang out-of-school excursion protocol. These excursions happen spontaneously. During the holidays, the children go on a planned excursion, which also follows the excursion protocol. The excursion protocol is discussed with parents during the intake interview.

11. Any other business

a. Extra days

Parents can request extra days. This request will be met provided that it does not result in us exceeding our teacher/child ratio policy. Because children often come here most days of the week and the area and the teachers are the same, we do not have a specific settling-in policy for children who come for extra days.

b. Regular faces for babies and being in another group

For babies it is important that they are not confronted with too many faces. Continuity of teachers is therefore necessary. We see to it that babies under 1 year old see one or two regular teachers every day during the week. However, we cannot guarantee this during holidays or when teachers get ill suddenly.

Sometimes groups work together, because of the child numbers. The teachers will always join them in another group.

c. Deviation teacher child ratio

In general, we deviate from the teacher child ratio on these times:

From 08.30 – 09.30 o'clock

From 13.30 – 14.30 o'clock

From 16.30 – 17.30 o'clock

It can be different on some of the groups, since we work with flexible groups.

Because most of the children are sleeping between 13 and 15 o'clock, we decided to have our lunchbreaks during that time, depending on when it's the most quiet on the group.

d. Extra activities

Apart from the activities, teachers organise every day, we also create the possibility to do extra activities. We provide music lessons for children from 8 months and older and yoga and gym lessons, for children from 2/2,5 years and older. Also, a grandma visits the nursery every two weeks to tell stories to the children.

e. Interns/volunteers

Sometimes we make use of volunteers and interns at our daycare center. We always make sure that we have their conduct of good behaviour and we introduce them to the children.