

PRESENTATION: 'WORKING WITHIN THE PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK'

Presentation to pedagogical staff members on the daycare centres' new activities methodology.

- What is the Pedagogical Framework?

Educational staff members at daycare centres play an important role in children's learning. Everyone agrees. Care = learning. This requires an educational approach that is specifically developed for childcare centres. The Pedagogical Framework for children aged 0-4 years is a pedagogical framework for working with young children in childcare centres. It demonstrates the important contribution of childcare centres to the development of young children.

The Pedagogical Framework is supported by the Dutch government and, on the order of the minister, is now being introduced in training programmes for carers. It also serves as the framework for all training run by the Bureau Kwaliteit Kinderopvang ('Quality in Childcare Bureau'). It is thus a national standard. The Pedagogical Framework is designed to be a map to guide institutions and educational staff to find their own ways of implementing it. It is a theoretical framework that helps visualise the content of the educational work in childcare centres. The Pedagogical Framework for children aged 0-4 years also acts as a stimulus to look more deeply in the profession. This is much needed as the educational aspects of childcare centres is undergoing development and presents a demanding challenge for open, creative, well trained and dedicated workers. The profession of educational staff member gained greater status in other countries after the curriculum was developed. If the status of the profession would increase in the Netherlands too, it would be a milestone. Greater value placed on those working in early childhood education by the public and at political level would lead to better childcare.

The Pedagogical Framework for children aged 0-4 years:

- inspires and supports educational staff members in their daily work;
- is the foundation for childcare centres' educational policy;
- makes scientific knowledge and practical skills accessible for the entire sector;
- is the basis for training for childcare centres;
- demonstrates to parents and interested parties what early childhood education and development means.

- Why are we going to work with it?

During the course of discussions about rates that the Zo board and the Central Parents' Committee went through, there was some discussion about the range of activities at the daycare centres. The dance and music lessons that have been provided by external teachers – sometimes weekly at some centres – will be dropped in 2013. Parents are sorry to lose these activities. It is important for them to see that their child's development is stimulated in many areas, and the music and dance lessons were a highly visible method.

This led to agreements being made with the Central Parents' Committee about the range of activities for 2013. Parents expressed the wish that the range be varied, well-founded and visible. This wish will be given more attention in 2013. We will use the Pedagogical Framework to decide on the range of activities for all locations and the reasons for choosing them. We will do this using the seven learning through play areas that the Framework describes. Many of these will be familiar to you, and they will now be put into practice. The Pedagogical Framework will be used to prepare and implement the range of activities, and to provide the underpinning for these choices. All parents will be informed about this new methodology at the beginning of 2013, but it will mostly be you who will familiarise them with it!

- Bonding and the opportunity to develop

Attachment theory research shows that young children bond to their educational carers. They see them as a safe haven from which to explore their surroundings and they turn to them for protection and comfort. The relationship of trust that grows between you and the children is at the heart of the children's learning and development. Young children between zero and seven years in particular significantly learn from the people whom they trust. And it is exactly this aspect that gives the added value to the activities if *you* run them as opposed to external teachers. This is thus a message that you need to share with parents! Their children will learn far more from you, given your relationship of trust, than from the dance or music teacher with whom they do not have that depth of relationship.

- What does it mean in practice?

The learning through play areas in the Pedagogical Framework for which activities will be available are:

- Movement and sensory stimulation
- Playing and living together
- Language and communication
- Nature and the physical environment
- Arranging, measuring and calculating
- Sound and music, dance and movement
- Artistic expression

In 2013 each learning through play area will be the focus twice, which means that this year will be divided into 14 periods so that each learning through play area will be the focus twice. Of course this does not mean that the other learning through play areas will not be covered. It simply means that the emphasis will lie on just one area at a time. As many of you already know, each area will have its own theme. Please feel free to suggest themes as the location managers would be pleased to use them. The first theme of 2013 for all locations in the Haaglanden area will be **Winter**. Winter will be linked to the **Language and communication** learning through play area. Every theme and its associated learning through play area will be launched with a workshop, the 'kick-off', and will be followed by smaller in-depth workshops, trips and daily activities – big or small – at the location. Each theme will run for a specified period. Parents will be kept up to date through the weekly overview. We will use one symbol for each learning through play area so that it is easily recognisable for everyone. During each theme period, it is very important that you and the children make the activities visible, that is, you will need to document the activities. Every theme/learning through play area will be closed with something concrete for the children and the parents. This could be a photo collage, a newspaper, an item on the website or in the newsletter, or a performance. This will allow the children to end the theme in a playful manner and will make clear to the parents what the group has done.

- What can we expect from you?

You may have come across the Pedagogical Framework's learning through play areas during your training. While you have been applying them in your daily practice, you are now required to make them more visible. This means that you need a thorough understanding of the learning through play areas. To this end, each location has a book to deepen your understanding and copies of all the chapters about the relevant learning through play areas will be made available. You will need to use the 'activity spider' to design activities for each learning through play area, make a plan of activities and carry out the activities according to the plan.

Workshops (internal and external) will be run in consultation with the location manager on working with each learning through play area. On top of this, it is important that you demonstrate to the parents how you are working with the learning through play areas. For example, while communicating verbally or in writing with the parents about what their children did during the day, please make sure you refer to the Pedagogical Framework's learning through play areas. In short, this means the following.

- Read chapters 16 to 22 of the Pedagogical Framework.
- Use the activity spider.
- Plan and carry out the activities accordingly.
- During the course of a theme, make it clear what you and the children are doing in the group.
- Document the theme period so that at the end the children can have a book, a newsheet to hang on the wall, a photo collage, a performance etc.
- Document the theme period so that at the end the parents can have the above and there will be a piece in the newsletter and online.
- Evaluate.