

Year Plan 2017-2021

The Children's House



Uniqueness and individuality – a world of difference

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1 Introduction

The Children`s House is governed by the Kindergarten Act, the regulatory framework that govern the purpose and content of the kindergarten.

Preschool education constitutes the most important period in children`s lives. It is the most prolific time of their lives for absorbing the sounds and meanings of the words, developing their fine and gross motor skills and laying the foundation for their social and emotional well- being. We are aware that together with parents we play a critical role in the development of these young explorers and target all the areas of their development, building the foundation for a lifetime of learning.



We recognize that all children are unique and individual with different strengths, interests and abilities. Our aim is to create an environment in which children succeed, are themselves and respect other individuals. We achieve that by introducing each child to activities she/he is able to accomplish, encouraging making choices and supporting his/her social and emotional development. With us, children learn that everybody is valued and that other people`s opinions and feelings are important and have to be respected. We make sure children recognize their own emotions (wonder, joy, sorrow), use their language to express them and teach our young learners constructive ways to convey both positive and negative feelings. Every day we help children to understand what is right and what is wrong and why it is important to be good boys and girls, share toys and materials with peers and adults in nursery. In our kindergarten children are taught social skills; they build friendships, establish concepts of fairness, sharing, cooperation, teamwork and self-control.

In our kindergarten children master language and literacy skills. It starts at a very basic level: we recognize that our everyday conversations are a primary source for the development of a growing child`s vocabulary and so we talk with our young learners during the day, during read aloud time, at lunch, outside. Moreover, our well-planned “Circle Time”, as the most educational part of the day, allows children to learn new language, gain knowledge of different concepts and also boosts interpersonal skills, it enhances self- confidence and allows all the participants to have a great time together. Children have influence on what is being discussed at the circle time, we listen to them and respond to their needs, encourage them to talk and share their stories, opinions and feelings. We keep circle time fun, it is filled with singing, rhyming, reading, physical movement and scientific experiments. In such a friendly environment, the learning process “just happens”.

We aim to prepare children for the next stage of their education and give them a unique opportunity to learn by having fun and spending their time in a loving, safe environment. Our program blends teacher directed and child-initiated activities; quiet and active projects; large group, small group and individual activities, and indoor and outdoor time. The development of the “whole child” is nurtured and valued. We engage children in science, math and art projects that allow for exploration, observation and experimentation. Fun and entertaining music sessions with a professional teacher are adapted to suit each age group and give children the best musical experience right from the start.

We work in many subject areas throughout our days. We vary our offer to provide suitable age related activities within the different departments.

2 Our History

The Children's House started from humble beginnings with three teachers and twenty students in two rented locations, The Children's House was started in January 1985. It began because a group of parents felt there was a need for an alternative to the pre-schools in the region. Classes started at 9:30am each day and ran until 2:30pm. There was no childcare program in the beginning. That grew from a need that parents expressed as they began working full time and needed a program for their children. Rented buildings were used up until the school bought the building on Kornbergveien. The Children's House was located there until July 2007 when we moved in to the new facility on Åsenvegen. Today we have 11 classes of children in our programs. There are of a total of 178 children and around 54 staff members.



There are about 60 nationalities represented amongst our students. Our teachers and staff come from many different countries. **The Children's House is a truly international pre-school!** This is one of the factors that make us unique! Another is that we provide education for children from the age of 12 months and up in both English and Norwegian. Most of our children are not native English speakers and our programs are therefore structured for English or Norwegian immersion. We have 8 classes in the English program and 3 classes in the Norwegian program. Through both of our programs, children are constantly exposed to the English and Norwegian language through games, stories, poems, songs, and activities. Each aspect of our programs is designed to make children feel comfortable in the relevant language so that they are able to communicate with their peers and teachers. Our goal is to make language learning fun and

natural so that children enjoy it and benefit from it. Our students are well prepared to enter the Norwegian school system or the International school system once they have completed our programs. That's no small accomplishment when you consider how many children enter our school unable to speak English or Norwegian! It's a point of pride to see how quickly the students adapt to the language and commence using it on a daily basis.

3 The purpose, values and tasks of kindergartens

The kindergartens value base is to be conveyed, practiced and experienced in all parts of the kindergartens educational work.

We as a kindergarten shall help all children in The Children's House to have a good childhood based on wellbeing and where friendship and play are fundamental.

Play, care, learning and positive attitude should be seen in this context.

3.1 The kindergarten Act and Framework plan for the Content and Tasks of Kindergartens

The social role of kindergartens is to offer pre-school children a care and educational environment that benefits each child. Kindergartens should provide both education and public service to the parents of young children (Ref. Section 1 Purpose, The Kindergarten Act).

The aim of the framework plan is to give the head teacher of the kindergarten, the pedagogical leaders and the other staff a binding framework for the planning, implementation and assessment of the activities of kindergartens. The framework plan also provides information for parents, owners and the supervisory authorities.

The framework plan shall be adapted to the differing ways of running kindergartens and to the local conditions and regulatory environments (For more details see chapter 12).

3.2 Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

All classes follow the International Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum that complies with the National Curriculum standards of Great Britain and the U.S.A.

- Focused exploration of natural phenomena, technology, and living things using observation, description and experimentation. Some examples include dinosaurs, electricity, fireworks, states of water, materials, Outer Space, various animals and insects.
- Using the children's own powers of curiosity and interest to direct topics for exploration
- Hands-on experience and focus on the use of all five senses during exploration both in class and outside
- Visual documentation of observations and experiences
- Focus on comparing for similarities, differences and changes
- Children use a camera to capture nature and moments in their day.
- Weekly learning and art activities on the computer for child use
- Fostering a respect for the natural world and a sense of responsibility to take care of The Earth and our environment through outdoor and classroom activities and discussions.

At our school we encourage the children to be independent and to try to master new activities/situations. We train at dressing and undressing, going to the bathroom alone and to performing simple messages.

We work in differing subject areas throughout our days. We vary our offers to provide suitable age related activities within the different departments.

3.3 Responsibility and roles

In relation to The Kindergarten Act, section 7, the owner of the kindergarten shall run the institution in accordance with current statutes and rules. The owner of the school together with the school's staff shall see that the goals and requirements are fulfilled.

4 Child Participation and Contribution

The child's viewpoints shall be regarded in relation to his age and maturity. This means that the staff in the kindergarten prepares activities that the children see as challenging and popular. We plan activities, projects and themes that the children are engaged in.

Children are to be encouraged to take part and contribute in making decisions regarding the daily activities. The children's views should be accountable according to their age and maturity (ref The Framework plan chapter 4 Children's participation)

The children evaluate the activities they are engaged in by using their body language or through discussion. One aid is photos of the children in their everyday pursuits. We have day reports and photo series that are placed in the cloakroom area.

The staff must make sure that they have time to listen to and discuss things with the children. Look at the body language signs and be available / prepared to interact.

The children are allowed to decide their activity during free play. The children have toys and material available. The toys have set places that are marked by pictures and text. Children's interests are regularly taken into account during planning and instructed activities.

5 Parent Involvement

The kindergarten should give all the children developmental and appropriate activities in cooperation and with the understanding of the home (The Framework plan, chapter 5, Collaboration between home and kindergarten). We meet both the children and parents at their arrival and departure from the kindergarten. Here we should exchange information that has relevance to the child, parents and staff. Parents receive weekly newsletter to keep them updated on upcoming events and class activities.

All parents are given the opportunity to "meet the teacher" for an informative discussion about their child before the child starts in the kindergarten. This is repeated every year as the child goes through the kindergarten system, so that each classroom teacher receives an informative update from the parent's perspective.

Parent/teacher discussions are held twice a year. There is a possibility for more discussions if the parents or the kindergarten require this. It is important that the parents think through what they wish to talk about in this discussion.

Parent meetings are held 2- 3 times yearly. One of the meetings is for new parents and the meeting is held in June.

The staff shall have confidentiality and sign a written agreement to this effect. As such, all information given by parents is held in confidence by the staff and shall be kept confidential.

The parents are assured influence through their participation in the board and SU (Cooperation committee is an advisory, contacting and coordinating body).

Parents and children are encouraged to share their culture and traditions within the class and the kindergarten.

6 Focus areas 2017-2021

The Children's House has decided to focus on two main focus areas for the next four years:

2017 – 2019: *Uniqueness, individuality and diversity; embracing our world of difference*

2019 – 2020: *Providing good learning language environment*

6.1 Uniqueness, individuality and diversity; embracing our world of difference

The Children's house will also use diversity as a resource in our work and support. The children are followed up based on their own cultural and individual prerequisites. This is one of our main focus areas.

This means that the staff shall

- promote respect for human dignity by visualizing, appreciating and promoting diversity and mutual respect (ref The Framework plan, chapter 1, The value of the kindergarten – diversity and mutual respect.
- we shall show how we can learn from each other and promote the children`s curiosity and feeling of wonder about similarities and differences.

In this connection we shall also lay the foundation for the children to think critically, act ethically and show solidarity in taking care of our surroundings and nature.

6.2 Providing a good learning language environment

Social competence and language skills are closely intertwined with each other (ref. The Framework plan, chapter 3, The purpose and content of the kindergarten). TCH goals amongst other things is to build high self-esteem in children.

We are also responsible good language and learning stimulations. All children shall take part in activities that promote communication and comprehensive language development.

The staff shall:

- Show care for the children in the kindergarten and make them feel secure.
- Direct the children in various situations and support them in their interaction with other children.
- Be role models for the children in the use of our language and tone.
- Have a common positive behaviour towards others and be aware of our actions.
- Take part in the children`s play.
- Stimulate their natural curiosity and search for knowledge.
- The adults shall be conscious of their actions with the use of colleague supervision.
- Have regular meetings/opportunities to reflect on our actions and activities in order to be more critical of our methods: i.e.: Staff meetings, teachers meetings, colleague discussions, team meetings, share information on attended courses or seminars.

7 Planning, documentation and evaluation

7.1 Planning

Planning gives us the basis for thinking and taking action on a long-term and systematic basis in the educational work. Planning contributes to continuity and progression both for single children and the child`s group. The planning is based on the children`s well-being and development as well as through observation, documentation, reflection, assessment and conversations with children and parents.

7.2 Evaluation

We shall evaluate the content of the kindergarten continuously.

Evaluation is a central theme at group meetings. The staff evaluates the groups and individual child`s development continuously. Various methods of evaluation include observation, written assessment where applicable, regular meetings with the child to discuss progress, likes, dislikes etc. The children have an

opportunity to express feelings towards activities presented in the Kindergarten so that staff may make changes or adjustments if needed according to the wishes of the children.

The teachers systematically evaluate the pedagogic work and intended goals in relation to the period plan, project work yearly plan and the framework of planning for the kindergarten.

The parents have the possibility to contribute to the evaluation process through parents conversations and daily through the delivery process. Each teacher has provided her email address and school phone number so that we are accessible to parents if they have questions or comments about what happens in our school.



The children shall in correspondence with their age and maturity take part in the evaluation process. We will ask the older children their opinion about our activities and their content. We will also interpret the child's body language. Those activities that are deemed more popular will be included more often.

7.3 Documentation

The staff documents what the child does and what they learn in the kindergarten.

Documentation is an important tool for reflection and learning. Documentation gives the parents and the staff information about what the child experiences, does and learns in the kindergarten. It is important that any information that affects the child's wellbeing is passed to the necessary people who work with that child so that proper programming takes place to coincide with the child's abilities and needs.

We will document the children's project work from through the use of pictures and text. The children each have a file or scrapbook where we put drawings, pictures and project work that the child has made. This file or scrapbook shows the growth and progress of each child during the year. Each child receives this file at different points during the year as a keepsake of their time with us.

We will regularly hang up a photo display that is available for display by both the parents and the children. Pictures are also emailed to parents of our daily activities to give a glimpse of what we do. It also encourages communication between the children and their families to reinforce concepts we are teaching.

7.4 Adapt the public /general educational situation for children that need extra support

We will ensure that those children that are identified as needing help receive early support in social participation and/ or the physical facilities that are necessary to give the child an inclusive and equal offer in the pedagogic arena.

8 Physical Development

The staff creates situations that give varied physical activity in kindergarten.

We stimulate the children to use their body for physical activity. We focus on the basic skills of creeping, rolling, walking, running and jumping. We will also introduce games that make physical activity popular. This can include obstacle courses and games with simple rules.

We have one set walk day a week and we use the surrounding environment for activity. This may be in the woods, the fields or in the housing area. Children need to see their surroundings, to explore, to be curious and to use their senses.

Through various project activities we encourage the development of fine motor skills.

9 Healthy Lunch Policy

The Children's House wants to encourage healthy eating so we have implemented a healthy lunch policy. We ask that each child bring a packed lunch that includes healthy items. We do not allow cookies, biscuits, sweets or chocolate or other sugar based spreads in the lunches. A healthy lunch should contain fruits, vegetables, sandwiches, yogurt, milk or water. We ask that all food must be prepared and ready to eat so that the child can help themselves at mealtimes. We do not offer the services of a microwave oven so we ask parents to consider a thermos if they wish to send along hot food. We also ask parents to be mindful of possible allergies to nuts or other items in classroom as well which may limit what foods can be brought into the class. Parents are asked to inform the school if their child has any allergies, food sensitivities or dietary restrictions so that accommodations may be made to plans for baking day or other special events.



10 Hygiene

Good hygiene is important to help the prevention and spreading of disease in the kindergarten. We encourage the children and adults to wash their hands on a regular basis. We work systematically to create good habits, when it comes to the children's hygiene such as washing hands after visiting the toilet/diaper changing and washing hands before eating.

11 Our Goals

Children are given the opportunity to learn and succeed through various experiences.

The children are able to experience and perceive through various situations/experiences that the adults provide/create.

This the children will experience through the various projects that the kindergarten will work on this year.



The children gain knowledge and experience about themselves and how to be a friend

The children shall gain experience of what happens in nature.

Experience gives learning. Every day offers opportunities for new impressions and adventures that give the children experience. Learning happens in the daily interaction between people and our environment. We shall have an active learning environment within the kindergarten, through formal and informal learning situations.

The children shall experience accomplishment as a means to stimulate self-confidence.

This can be done by various means:

- Use songs, song games, rules and stories.
- Go on weekly walks in the local environment.
- Let the parents contribute with knowledge and come with suggestions of activities.
- Let the staff share their knowledge, show enthusiasm and creativity to gain the interest of the children.

12 Learning areas

The Norwegian Framework has a total of seven learning areas to ensure that the kindergarten's content is comprehensive and diverse. These learning areas, along with working methods and goals, will often overlap and must be seen in close connection to each other. The areas are process oriented and focus on children's play, learning and experiences. Learning areas will often be integrated into everyday activities and goals will be based on children's maturity, age and interests.

The purpose and values of the kindergarten shall guide the direction for our work with the learning areas. The children in the kindergarten have a right to express their views and also be given the opportunity to take an active part in planning and assessing the activities of the kindergarten (ref the Kindergarten Act, chapter 2).

It is vital that children have shared knowledge and experiences in order to play and interact well together. These are experiences we aim to give each child to best stimulate their development and learning ability: "to foster children's curiosity and thirst for knowledge and desire to learn, and shall help to provide a sound basis for lifelong learning".

The role of the staff is of vital importance in all areas of learning and development, they shall be present, active and involved in the progression of children in their search for knowledge.

12.1 Communication, language and text

The kindergarten plays an important role in providing early and good language stimulation. All children should have the opportunity to develop their verbal and non-verbal language, communication and pre-writing skills. Having good conversations with the children and being a good listener is essential to a child's language development.

1 - 3 years	4 – 6 years
Pictures of everyday, known objects Locating every day, known objects Simple songs/rhymes/riddles Use of objects during story telling Reading stories out loud Looking at picture books	Turn taking in conversation, listening Encouraged to share experiences and to ask questions Name recognition and writing practice, letter sound recognition Read aloud stories

Focus words for each theme Use of words and concepts during everyday situations Playing lotto games	Rhyming and syllable games Express feelings – learn to negotiate Role play activities Theme words and games to help develop language Talk about the past, present and the future.
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12.2 Body, movement food and health

During a child’s first years, they should learn basic fine and gross motor skills, body control, physical abilities, good health and dietary habits. Children learn about themselves and others through physical activity. They learn to respect their own and others capabilities and boundaries. Their experiences should make them feel confident and give a sense of achievement. The children need to develop positive attitudes and knowledge with regard to hygiene and diet.

1 - 3 years	4 – 6 years
Crawling/walking/climbing/jumping Grip and release Body awareness (body parts) Moving in uneven terrain Practice riding tricycle Rolling/throwing/kicking ball Beading Practice dressing Potty-training Practice washing hands Practice eating independently Positive dialogue during mealtimes. Eating a variety of food	In-depth exploration of how various body parts work Hand hygiene focus First Aid practice and role play Focus on healthy eating habits Regular use of outdoor obstacle course Outside play two times daily Weekly walks in the local environment Gym activities and ball practice Playing organized games on the play ground Fine motor practice with small manipulatives, Support with independence in dressing

12.3 Art, culture and creativity

Children should be able use their imagination and be creative. It is important that they develop an ability to observe their surroundings and express themselves artistically. Creating, or doing something together, contributes to a sense of fellowship. Children create their own culture based on first-hand experiences.

1 - 3 years	4 – 6 years
Painting (fingers/utensils) Play in the sandbox Use of simple musical instruments Dancing/singing Coloring Sensory play Role play Use of fairytales and stories (with objects/dramatize) Books/pictures easily accessible Construction play	Painting with a variety of tools Mixing mediums in free choice projects Practice drawing basic images such as face, body, car, animal, house, etc Mix of 2D and 3D art projects Play dough and “troll deig” activities Building with a variety of construction toys Repetition of familiar songs and introduction of new songs Listening to different types of music Exposure to playing many different instruments Musical performances for peers and parents

12.4 Nature, environment and technology

Children should have the opportunity to experience nature and gain an understanding of plants, insects, animals and weather. It is also important to learn about respect for the environment. There shall be a Focused exploration of natural phenomena, technology and living things using observation, description and experimentation.

1 - 3 years	4 – 6 years
Walks outside the kindergarten during all seasons Play with water/ice/snow Play with nature materials Picking flowers Looking at animals/insects	Using the children’s own powers of curiosity and interest to direct topics for exploration Focus on the use of all five senses during exploration both in class and outside Visual documentation of observations and experiences Focus on comparing for similarities, differences and changes in nature. Explaining the seasons and the life cycles of insects. Children use the camera to capture nature and moments in their day. Weekly learning and art activities on the computer for child use Fostering a respect for the natural world and a sense of responsibility to take care of The Earth and our environment through outdoor and classroom activities and discussions

12.5 Numbers, spaces and shapes

Children should develop their mathematical competence through play, experimentation and everyday activities. It is important to encourage and stimulate children’s curiosity and their need for exploration.

1 - 3 years	4 – 6 years
Counting Songs/rhymes/stories with numbers and counting Sorting (toys, colors etc.) Matching (objects, colors etc.) Use of prepositions (over, under) Inset puzzles/simple jigsaw puzzles Shape recognition (circle, square, triangle)	Encourage the correct use of mathematical terms and comparison concepts in play Practice counting and sorting Play with a wide variety of number games and activities Exploring number concepts outside and in nature Practice number recognition and formation Exploration of 2D and 3D shapes Experience using measurement, weight and capacity skills to explore and compare in environment Adding games and activities Exploration of patterns in numbers to 100 Role play and experience using money Graphing familiar information such as colors of clothing, numbers of favorite foods, etc. Games and activities to begin to tell time

12.6 Ethics, religion and philosophy

The kindergarten shall reflect and respect the diversity of children. The children will form attitudes and values that will shape the way they see themselves and others. A child's curiosity is just as important as an adult ability to take them seriously. Every child should be met with respect, in regard to his/her thoughts and ideas.

1 - 3 years	4 – 6 years
Greeting others (gestures/words) Listening to others Showing care for others (empathy) Ways of expression Giving thanks Asking for help Taking turns/sharing	A mutual respect for each others culture, children shall promote their country and its traditions. Explore a variety of texts and music from around the world look at different types of homes, families, clothing around the world Activities surrounding United Nations Day Encouraging families to support us in sharing and celebrating cultural traditions. Celebration of traditional Norwegian holidays and learning about Norway's history and cultures Looking at different ways to manage feelings, conflicts and differences of thoughts and opinions

12.7 Local community and society

Children should experience being part of a society. It is essential that they are seen and heard. A child's participation in the kindergarten provides their first insight into a democratic society. Children shall also participate in discovering and exploring their local community, to learn about the world outside their home and kindergarten.

1 - 3 years	4 – 6 years
Individual and group activities Get to know the physical space of the kindergarten (building/outdoor area) Exploring the local community United Nations Day Expressing themselves during circle time Going for walks in the local community Differences/similarities between boys/girls Understanding of traffic rules (when going for walks) Helping adults with everyday tasks	The Children shall experience that their own interests and needs are reflected in the activities of the group and that they are valued members of the group Practice listening, taking turns, sharing ideas, compromising and working together in various situations and through various activities Yearly visit to a local nursing home to perform holiday songs and pass out cookies Topic activities to highlight jobs in our community such as fire fighters, police and healthcare workers. Attention paid to supporting the equality of activities, roles and jobs for boys and girls. Learning about the Sami culture through music, clothing, and language Learning about Viking history through stories, clothing, jewelry, boats, home life and role-play

13 Collaboration

13.1 Departments

The children change departments each autumn, meeting new staff and new classrooms. They take with them the social and academic learning they have gained in that department. During spring and the new school year the children visit their new classrooms to get to know the room and the staff for the next school year.

13.2 Primary school

The Children`s House prepares the children for the start of compulsory schooling.

Each day at TCH there are exciting activities that stimulate the child's interests and provides motivation to experience and learn new things. The day is divided into predictable routines and transitions that the child will experience at school. At the same time the children are taught that the routine can be set aside when activities that capture their imagination are found and are developed and that we can spontaneously change the routine.
Mother and child health clinics

Health Clinics shall amongst other give advice guidance on provision of medication at kindergartens and on the prevention of contagious diseases.

13.3 Child welfare service

Norway has a comprehensive child welfare system under which local authorities have duties and responsibilities towards children in need in their area. This covers the provision of advice and services for the accommodation and care of children who become uncared for. It also provides the capacity to initiate proceedings for the removal of children from their parents care/care proceedings. The criterion for the latter is 'significant harm' which covers physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect.

13.4 Pedagogical-psychological counselling service (PPT)

PPT is the expert body for recommendations on special education assistance and where the kindergarten can seek collaboration and help. If the school seeks collaboration and help with an individual child at the kindergarten, the parents must have given their consent. Parent shall be actively involved in the cooperation as well.

14 The Children`s House contacts details

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