This is how we do things

Regulations and Agreement

K.U. Leuven

CHILDREN'S DAY CARE CENTRES

Leuven, March 2011
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Dear Parents

Welcome to our children's day care centres!

Every time you bring your baby or toddler to the day care centre you are entrusting your child to our child carers, who will be working with him/her very closely over a number of months and will be building a trusting relationship. Your daily conversations with the childcare assistants and the use of a diary will create a fruitful collaborative relationship between both child-rearing contexts. Nevertheless, the primary responsibility for parenting still belongs to you.

We make sure that your child feels safe, comfortable and protected when he/she is here (ensuring his/her well-being) and that his/her physical and mental development proceeds as smoothly as possible.

Our staff will try to make the experience as positive and enjoyable for your child as possible. Our children's day centres have colourful rooms with a range of discovery and play corners containing something to interest every child. Children can also play outdoors, with the sandbox and water tray, on bicycles, on the grass etc.

We regularly hold Parent Meetings, both for individual care groups and for all children. These are useful for sharing information, getting to know each other, exchanging ideas or focusing on particular topics.

To optimise our collaboration, we would like to draw your attention to our Regulations and Agreement, so that you are completely aware of how we work, what you and your child can expect from us and what we expect from you. This information will help you to familiarise yourself more quickly with the way our children's day centres work.

Mutual trust and open discussion will ensure that both you and we derive maximum pleasure every day from caring for your child.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

On behalf of the staff

Barbara Vrijdags
Director
Brief history

Our children's day centres first came into being in their present form in 1968. On 19 February 1968 De Peutertuin (The Toddlers' Garden) opened its doors under the management of Ms Cloet-Mullie. At the beginning there were 60 children. Now we have 82.

It soon became obvious that we needed to grow. In 1972 Babyhome was set up at Tervuursevest in Heverlee, providing day care for 44 babies. After renovation work in 1983, we were able to provide day care for toddlers, too. Now there is room for 62 children.

Alongside these two children's day care centres De Villa in Heverlee was made available to us by IMEC (in 1991). After some modifications to the building, we are now able to provide day care for 56 children there.

Beyond the Leuven area, 't Grootpark (The Big Park) in Lovenjoel opened its doors to 23 children in 1995. After some renovation work we are now able to provide day care for 51 children here. This creche recently celebrated its 15th anniversary.

Finally, a new building - De Kabouterberg (The Gnomes' Mountain) - was completed at the Gasthuisberg campus (2002), to accommodate 116 children. Nevertheless, this was still not sufficient to meet the strong demand. For this reason the Kabouters (The Gnomes) mini-creche was opened in 2005. This popular but non-subsidised creche is located opposite De Kabouterberg. Its work is made possible thanks to support from the University Hospitals. Kabouters offers comfortable accommodation for 28 children every day.

Since many of the children are not registered full-time, however, we are able to look after a much larger number of children.
I GENERAL

1.1 Our children's day care centres

Our children's day care centres are open to all children, but some children are welcomed as a priority.
Parents can bring their children to us for day care from the age of 6 weeks to about 3 years, and we offer limited out-of-school care until the age of 6. A home care service is also provided for children who are unwell, up to the age of 12.

The general management of the centres is in the hands of the Director, Ms Barbara Vrijdags. She coordinates the work of the five children's day care centres and the "Kabouters" mini-creche.
She can be contacted by telephone on 016 33 08 70. If you need to contact us outside opening hours, please use the K.U. Leuven switchboard on 016 32 11 11; they can make contact with the management.

1.2 Opening times and addresses

The children's day care centres are open from Monday to Friday, from 7.30 to 18.30. At Kabouterberg and Kabouters we also offer flexicare. (1)

Each of our centres has one or more team leaders. We would like to introduce them and let you know how to contact them:

Kabouterberg and Kabouters mini-creche:
Leadership team: Nele Lapiere - Lore De Cooman - Veerle Bruyninckx

Address: Herestraat 49 (Gasthuisberg, car park 3), 3000 Leuven
Tel.: 016 33 08 60
E-mail: nele.lapiere@kdv.kuleuven.be; lore.decooman@kdv.kuleuven.be; veerle.bruyninckx@kdv.kuleuven.be

Kabouterberg and Kabouters are the only creches in our group offering flexicare: from 6.15 to 20.15, subject to supporting evidence (= employer's certificate).

At Kabouterberg we also offer limited out-of-school care: on specific days when schools are closed, from 7.45 to 18.00. Children from Kabouterberg have priority.

How we work:
- structured mixed-age groups¹ at Kabouterberg
- structured semi-mixed age groups at Kabouters

¹ For an explanation of these terms: see Our Educational Approach (below)
**Peutertuin**
Leadership team: Cindy Wouters

Address: de Croylaan 8, 3001 Heverlee
Tel.: 016 32 24 52
E-mail: cindy.wouters@kdv.kuleuven.be

At Peutertuin we also offer limited out-of-school care: on days when schools are closed and on Wednesday afternoons, from 7.45 to 18.00. Children from Peutertuin have priority.

**How we work:**
- there is one mixed-age group
- the other groups are semi-mixed age groups

**Villa**
Leadership team: Trees Steyaert - Iris Tomczak

Address: Steengroevenlaan 1, 3001 Heverlee
Tel.: 016 23 32 58
E-mail: trees.steyaert@kdv.kuleuven.be and iris.tomczak@kdv.kuleuven.be

**How we work:**
At Villa we have same-age groups.

**Babyhome**
Leadership team: Katrijn Leempoels - Emilie De Poorter

Address: Tervuursevest 105, 3001 Heverlee
Tel.: 016 32 92 92
E-mail: katrijn.leempoels@kdv.kuleuven.be and emilie.depoorter@kdv.kuleuven.be

**How we work:**
At Babyhome we have same-age groups.

**Grootpark**
Team Leader: Karolien Slagmolen

Address: Groot Park 17, 3360 Lovenjoel
Tel.: 016 46 31 12
E-mail: karolien.slagmolen@kdv.kuleuven.be

**How we work:**
- there is one mixed-age group
- the other groups are semi-mixed age groups
1.3 **Children's day care policy**

1.3.1 Enrolment

- Parents usually contact us via the internet at the beginning of the pregnancy: [http://www.kuleuven.be/kinderdagverblijven](http://www.kuleuven.be/kinderdagverblijven). There they can find general information about how our children's day care works. Those who wish to do so can register on the waiting list.

- It is very important that parents should understand all the options available before choosing the day care centre that seems most suitable for their child.

- Short-term care is not always possible. Both for educational reasons (familiarity) and for organisational reasons, we ask that children should attend day care at least part-time and with some degree of regularity.

- We are also able to give attention to children with specific care needs. This is done through detailed discussions with parents and other caregivers.

- If there is a place available for your child at our children's day care centres, the team leader will invite you to come for a visit. After a guided tour they will run through these Regulations (“This is how we do things”) and the Agreement. This gives you a clear view of the way we work.

- The starting date and the day care plan are set down in a written Agreement which is binding both for parents and for the day care centre. The agreed days and times are used as a basis when creating the care group and calculating the monthly parent contribution. If you have an irregular day care plan (e.g. hospital staff) you must inform us of the days and times when your child will be in day care at least one month in advance.

- Any change in the Agreement is discussed with the team leader, so that care groups do not unexpectedly become too large or too small. A new Agreement is then signed with the parents.

- To secure your child's place you must pay the registration fee within fourteen days after signing these Regulations and the Agreement. If this is not done in time, your reservation will be cancelled. The fee will be deducted from the bill for the last month of day care. If the parents decide not to use day care, the day care centre will keep the registration fee as a charge to cover the costs incurred in making the reservation.

- We expect the parents to send us a birth announcement card. We will then send them the child observation book "Kijk, ik word groot" (Look, I am growing up).
1.3.2 Day care routine and Info folder

A few weeks before the first day at the day care centre, the parents should contact us again to familiarise themselves with the way we work and arrange at least three taster sessions with the care group. Both you and your child will have an opportunity to get to know the childcare assistants. At first your child will be able to encounter this new environment from a safe position on a parent's lap. The childcare assistant will then also have an opportunity to hold the baby. This allows the relationship between the child and his childcare assistant to develop. During these sessions parents will have the opportunity to ask practical questions and show how they relate to their child. The childcare assistant can learn about the child's sensitivities, so that better care can be provided later on. This helps your child to feel more at home here during the first few days.

When you come for this visit, please bring the following documents with you: (see also the Info folder)
- your tax return for the ................................ tax year
- or if you have no income, proof of this from the RVA (Belgian National Employment Office)
- two of the child's stickers from your health insurer
- proof of payment of child benefit or your entitlement card
- a household composition certificate (via the town hall) or membership certificate (available from your health insurer)

The team leader will then discuss the Info folder.
This folder includes forms to give us full information about your child (feeding, sleep, habits, daily routine at home, medical details, etc.) and the documents we need for his/her file.
Our door is always open if parents want to know how their child is getting on during the day. You can call us at any time to find out how things are going.

If there are changes in the number of dependent children, your income, your child benefit fund, your telephone number or address while your child is with us, we need to be informed of these as soon as possible.

1.3.3 Dropping off and collecting

- When dropping off or collecting your child the childcare assistant must always be informed and the attendance register must always be signed, even if the children are playing outside. It is also important to inform us if you cannot be contacted during the day.
- Parents have free access to the children's day care centre at all times, as long as the child does not find it difficult each time when they leave. We ask parents not to disturb the children's lunchtime nap in the toddler group between 12.00 and 14.00.
- The children's day care centre will only entrust the children to the individuals mentioned in the Agreement. If there is a change in parental authority or custody and visiting rights while your child is attending the day care centre, it will be necessary to
update the Agreement as soon as possible. If a third person is going to drop off or collect your child, this must be written in the diary, indicating that person's surname and first name and we may ask for their identity card.

- If the named person is not able to collect the child safely (due to sickness, drunkenness etc.), the person in charge may refuse to allow them to collect the child. We will then have a discussion to work out the best possible solution in the circumstances. Someone else may be asked to come and collect the child or a later time may be agreed.

- When collecting children, we would ask you to be in the care groups no more than five minutes before closing time and to make sure that brothers or sisters who are with you respect our premises and equipment.

- If you repeatedly arrive too late, the team leader will ask you to arrive on time or look for another solution. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory outcome, you will receive a registered letter giving you one month's notice.

1.3.4 Absences

In the event of an unexpected absence (e.g. a sick child, parent on holiday etc.) you must inform the children's day care centre before 8.30. If we are not informed of the absence, you will be charged for 1/3 of a day.

1.3.5 Closing days

- Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.

- Each year parents are given a list of closing days for the day care centre (see the next page). These are also published on our website.

- We are closed each year for the summer holiday in July/August and between Christmas and New Year. At these times one of our children's day centres - Kabouterberg - will provide a limited cover service for children and parents who cannot make arrangements during our regular holiday period. The condition for this is that there must be at least 15 children wishing to use the cover service during this period.

- We may also schedule additional closing days. All parents will be informed of these closing days at least one month in advance.
## CLOSING DAYS IN 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 2 February</td>
<td>K.U. Leuven Patron's Feast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 25 April</td>
<td>Easter Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 2 June</td>
<td>Ascension Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 3 June</td>
<td>Day in lieu of 1 January 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 13 June</td>
<td>Whit Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 11 July (cover)</td>
<td>Flemish Community Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 18 July to</td>
<td>Annual holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 15 August (cover)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 5 September (cover)</td>
<td>Leuven Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 31 October (cover)</td>
<td>Bridging Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 1 November</td>
<td>All Saints' Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 2 November (cover)</td>
<td>All Souls' Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 11 November (cover)</td>
<td>Armistice Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 26 December to</td>
<td>Christmas Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 6 January 2012 (cover)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The cover day care service is always an emergency solution and is limited. A minimum of 15 children is always required. Opening times are from 7.30 to 18.30. It is important to register in good time.

Consult our website, where you can download a registration form or ask the team leader for a form.
1.4 Information about insurance

The K.U. Leuven Insurance Service provides the necessary insurance cover, including civil liability insurance and personal accident insurance for the children at the day care centre. Please inform us via the team leader within 24 hours of any injury or accident, so that they can pass this information on to the Insurance Service. The children's day care centre is not responsible for damage to or theft of personal items.

While parents are in the children's day care centre building with their child, both when dropping off and when collecting a child, they remain responsible for their children and also for children who come to the day care centre with them. Other people who drop off or collect children are responsible in the same way.

1.5 Complaints

Parents can contact the team leader of their children's day care centre or the general management of the children's day care centres if they have any questions and suggestions (tel. 016 33 08 70).

We know that parents often come up with fresh ideas and suggestions; you can write these down on the suggestions form (in the Info folder or on our website). Suggestions will be discussed within the staff team. If they are feasible, you may see some of your ideas being put into practice later on.

If you have a complaint about our services you can discuss the problem with the person involved or with their superior. It may simply be a misunderstanding that can be sorted out through a discussion.

If this discussion does not produce a satisfactory solution or outcome, you can write down your complaint on a complaints form (in the Info folder or on our website). This complaint will be submitted to the management, who will provide you with an answer or find an appropriate solution as quickly as possible (within one month).

You can give suggestions forms and complaint forms to the team leader or put them in the letterbox at your children’s day care centre. (Anonymous complaints will not be accepted).

Points for discussion or complaints can also be submitted to the Kind en Gezin (Child and Family) Complaints Department, Hallepoortlaan/avenue de la Porte de Hal 27, 1060 Brussels, tel. 02 533 14 14.

1.6 Quality
Quality manual

The Flemish Government has issued a Decree on Quality Assurance, which requires public welfare institutions to have a quality management system which is set down in a quality manual. Our quality manual is held by the team leader at each of our children's day care centres and can be consulted on request.

Inspection Report

The K.U. Leuven children's day care centres are approved and subsidised by Kind en Gezin (Child and Family). We therefore have inspections carried out by them. At our premises you can ask to view the inspection report from the latest inspection and discuss it with the management. This will give you a clear view of how we are doing and the steps that are being taken to improve quality.

Law on the protection of personal privacy

Our children's day care centres are governed by the Law on the protection of personal privacy of 8 December 1992 which covers the processing of personal data. The children's day care centre may ask for personal data when you register and throughout the time when your child is with us. This concerns administrative data about the child. Where it is relevant to the care we provide, we may also record social data or medical information about other family members. Medical information can only be requested under the authority of a doctor. When administrative and social data are requested and processed, this comes under the responsibility of the team leader. As a parent you are entitled to access administrative data relating to your child, yourself or your family, and to ask for them to be corrected. Our staff will not share any information about your child or the fact that he/she attends our children's day care centre with any third party. They will show the necessary discretion in this respect.
II INTERNAL WORKING REGULATIONS

2.1 Mission Statement

2.1.1 An open house

Since it is a priority for us to ensure that every child can develop a close relationship with the person who cares for him/her each day, we try to have a regular childcare assistant with whom the child will feel safe and protected. Our care culture is based on evidence in the fields of educational theory and development psychology.

Open communication with parents occurs through everyday contacts, information sharing and an observation book that is kept for every child. We seek to maintain a fruitful collaborative relationship so that both child-rearing environments can support each other. We also offer social, emotional, parenting and medical support to children and their parents.

Each member of staff shares responsibility for the child’s day-to-day care and works as part of a professional team. Through continuing training we ensure that our staff are constantly resourced and have fresh, up-to-date perspectives on their work. We aim to create a pleasant working environment for all our staff. We see building their professional qualities and motivation as the best way to guarantee high-quality child care. External contacts are important for us, since they create scope for input from both sides.

We are interested in the latest developments and social changes in the area of child care, and we respond to these when they can help us to improve the quality of our services.
2.2 Our educational approach

2.2.1 Collaborative child-rearing

By entrusting your child to us you are indicating that you are willing to share the work and responsibility of child-rearing with the children’s day care centre. The role of the regular childcare assistant, with whom your child will develop a close relationship, is very important to us. Equally vital to ensure that everything goes well is day-to-day information sharing about all your child’s ups and downs. Besides, it should also be possible to discuss difficulties openly.

It goes without saying that we want to help you to succeed in your chosen combination of work and family life.

We work with skilled, dedicated staff who are always engaged in continuing training. A permanent team of experts is responsible for our day-to-day work. This team includes the following people:

- Regular childcare assistants = support workers - who are familiar with the child and his/her parents.
- Childcare assistants who are responsible for looking after sick children at home.
- Group leaders who are responsible for medical supervision, providing day-to-day guidance to childcare assistants and keeping the administration up to date. They also bridge the gap between the family and the children's day care centre, which helps us to ensure smooth collaboration.
- A nursery teacher and/or childcare assistants who look after children in the out-of-school care service.
- An educationalist, Marina De Greef, who monitors our educational principles and supports our team. You can also contact her for advice on parenting. You can ask the day care centre team leader for an appointment with her, or contact her directly by e-mail: marina.degreef@kdv.kuleuven.be.
- Maintenance staff or outside cleaning companies who are responsible for day-to-day maintenance.

Additional, ad-hoc staff with specific qualifications who are available to help us:
- We sometimes make use of volunteers.
- Trainees from a number of different schools regularly join our team. Through training placements we aim to make an active contribution towards training future staff.

All these people work together to make the children's day care centre what it is. In other words, the quality of our staff reflects the quality of our day care centre.
2.2.2 Continuity of care

When you bring your child to our children's day care centre, you are entrusting him/her to the professional care of our childcare assistants.

It is important for young children always to be welcomed in the same safe, familiar place and to spend time with familiar, reliable adults. Creating the highest possible level of continuity of care is a key concern in our children's day care centres. Our various care groups are therefore arranged carefully, taking into account the infrastructure of our different centres.

Here is a brief summary of the different ways in which we work:

**In same-age groups**, the children start off as babies in a group with a regular childcare assistant and other babies of about the same age. As they grow older, the toddlers move into a suitable room together with their childcare assistant or they are divided up and join a different toddler group, again with a regular childcare assistant. They stay in the same group until they go to nursery school.

**In semi-mixed age groups** the children start off as babies in a group with a regular childcare assistant, together with other children aged between 3 months and 15 to 18 months. At around the age of 15 to 18 months they go to a new toddler group with a new childcare assistant in a suitable room.

**In mixed-age groups** there is a constant influx of babies into a group that includes other babies and toddlers. They are looked after as a mixed-age group. Brothers and sisters can be together. Within these mixed-age groups, we bring together children of about the same age during the day. In the mornings and evenings the children can enjoy each other's company.

2.2.3 Look, I am growing up

We safeguard the good physical and mental development of children in our children's day care centres. To achieve this, we use the Kind en Gezin (Child and Family) quality criteria. We pay special attention to individuality, self-reliance, flexibility, structure, stimulation, freedom of movement and safety.

Without going into too much detail, we will look briefly at some of the important areas we focus on.

**a) Motor development**

The layout of our centres takes into account the space that children need at different stages in their development (babies who can roll over and sit up, crawlers, walkers, climbers etc.). 'Baby gymnastics' is our word for games in which the children enjoy using their motor skills together with their regular childcare assistant (more information about this will be given at the first Parent Meeting).

Suitable play equipment and furniture is of course available for each age group. The children can also enjoy themselves in the garden: running, climbing, cycling, see-sawing, sliding, crawling ...
and falling over.

**b) Physical development**
The physical aspect of child care is not only about medical care and hygiene (see washing and dressing). Baby gymnastics is also an excellent opportunity to give your child extra cuddles and to enjoy each other's company.
The larger toddlers are playfully encouraged to go on the potty. We work with parents on starting toilet training for the children. It makes no sense to start this process if the child is not ready for it yet. Children are not all ready for this at the same age.

**c) Sensory development**
Since young children mostly explore and learn about their surroundings through sensory experience, we devote a lot of attention to this aspect. Fun and learning to enjoy sensory stimuli are important.

*Seeing and looking*
In our play rooms we have attractive, colourful pictures and mobiles hanging at eye level for the children. This means that babies can learn to distinguish not only light and dark but colours and shapes as well. We offer children visual experiences that are suitable for their age. They can look in the mirror, gaze at bubbles etc. Through peek-a-boo games they learn to recognise and seek out the childcare assistant and the other children.

*Hearing and listening*
The childcare assistant talks and sings with the children. They learn to recognise his/her voice, which makes them feel safer and calmer. They also learn to distinguish other sounds, by playing with all sorts of rattles, bells, xylophones etc. The older children dance and sing along to music, learn simple songs and listen to songs or stories.

*Feeling and touching*
Young children find out about the world by feeling around them with their hands and by putting everything in their mouth. They experience 'feeling' with their whole body. They like physical contact. Babies like to feel your warm skin or water on their bodies and they like to be stroked and cuddled. They are delighted with soft cushions. We offer them a whole range of experiences, using many different materials: hard and soft, warm and cold, rough and smooth, wet and dry etc. Toddlers have a wonderful time playing with water and sand. They enjoy messy play with dough, clay or finger painting. Young children are intent on discovering and experimenting. They are still a long way from making finished crafts. The activities at the children's day centres are therefore focused on experimenting and messy play. It is quite rare to actually make a finished item.
**Flavours and tasting**
At mealtimes and playtimes we focus on warm and cold, sweet and sour; not everything tastes equally good.

**Smelling**
This sense is already strongly developed in babies; for example they can identify their mother in this way at a very early age. Through everyday experiences they learn to identify different smells. Toddlers sometimes find different smells quite exciting.

d) **Language**
Since we see contact as very important, we of course also talk to the children a lot; even when they are babies. Even ordinary actions are accompanied by words. We tell stories, read aloud and look at books. The children look at pictures and name objects. All this babbling contributes to language development and supports the interaction between child and childcare assistant, which is essential for a good relationship.

e) **Affective and social**
Since we aim to provide a regular childcare assistant or a regular team of childcare assistants, a close relationship quickly forms between these carers and your child. As a result the child soon feels safe and learns to trust the people and things around him/her. A transitional object (a cuddly toy, a dummy, mummy's scarf etc.) helps children to say goodbye to their parents and can be comforting at difficult moments.

Since every child is different, we place different items within the children's reach in different corners of the playrooms. There are discovery, sensory and hideaway corners for the babies. The toddlers have larger play areas where they can use their motor skills and also experiment with their developing imagination.

At an early stage in development we aim to support early independence and encourage having a go at things alone: playing, eating, walking, going on the potty, dressing and undressing etc. They may protest a little, but they also have to learn what is possible and allowed, and what is not. Particularly for toddlers, learning to play together and share toys can still be difficult. Through their quarrels they learn to express their feelings in an acceptable way and how to make friends again. Problems that occur frequently such as rivalry, hitting and biting are addressed by showing disapproval for unwanted behaviour but above all by praising positive behaviour.

The children's well-being and engagement is regularly checked using ZIKO (Self-Assessment Tool in Child Care), which may result in changes in our approach.

*Our educational approach is open to discussion between parents and the children's day care centre. Our leadership team and our management are keen to hear your questions and open to suggestions.*
2.2.4 Moving on to nursery school

In the toddlers' care group the children are prepared for their next step to the 'big school'. The childcare assistant prepares them for nursery school by playing games and telling stories. If you have questions about whether your child is ready for nursery school, you can contact the team leaders at any time. We advise parents to visit the nursery school with their child during this period to build familiarity. Good preparation usually results in a smoother transition. Practical circumstances and developmental factors are all important, such as toilet training, language development, social integration and need for sleep.

When the majority of the care group are ready for nursery school, it will soon be time to move on. If your child is in a children's day care centre with same-age groups and you feel as a parent that your child is not ready for nursery school yet, he/she can join an existing group within the children's day care centre, if your child's own care group comes to an end. This is arranged through discussion between parents, the childcare assistant and the team leader.

You can find information about our 'out-of-school care' on p. 24.

2.2.5 Working with parents

Our management and staff aim to work closely with parents. They keep parents fully informed about their approach and also share their experiences with their child at all times.

Parents provide the children's day care centre with the information we need to adapt the care we provide to suit the child's individual needs. The staff are glad to help with any questions.

Your suggestions and comments are valued. You will regularly be asked to complete a survey to evaluate the way we work.

How do we organise this collaboration in practice?

❖ with parent meetings

We arrange two evenings each year at each of our centres to which parents are invited for a friendly chat. This is an opportunity for parents to meet and get to know each other, share ideas and ask questions. The child's regular childcare assistant and the team leader provide information on day-to-day progress (feeding, care, play, etc.)

When our toddlers are ready for nursery school there may be a farewell party. That is an opportunity to share ideas about the transition to nursery school.

Parents are given the completed observation book Look, I am growing up as a permanent reminder.
with information evenings

Every year we also hold an information evening, with a speaker who is able to offer insights on an interesting topic. This will be a topic that relates to children and it will often fit in with our annual theme. Suggestions are always welcome.

by offering advice on child-rearing

You may be uncertain how to deal with a particular situation (e.g. in relation to toilet training, sleeping or the "terrible twos"). You may also feel that your child has not reached a particular stage of development when the literature says that he/she should already have done so. In these situations you can contact our educationalist, Marina De Greef. She can observe your child in the day time group and have a personal discussion with you about it. You can reach her at the following e-mail address: marina.degreef@kdv.kuleuven.be
III COMMITMENTS BETWEEN PARENTS AND THE CHILDREN'S DAY CARE CENTRE

3.1 A day at the children's day care centre

Young children need structure. A routine makes them feel safer.

Welcoming

Parents bring their children to the childcare assistant, who will welcome the child according to his/her own ritual (some like to be cuddled, others like to hold hands or sit on her lap; others give their carer a kiss). The childcare assistant talks to the parents (how was the night, is everything all right...) and then says goodbye together with the child. From this conversation and the diary (see also the next point: sharing information) the childcare assistant can access the information he or she needs to understand and look after the child. Toddlers must be brought in before 10.30, since otherwise it is difficult for them to join in with the daily routine.

Sharing information

For information that must not be forgotten, every child has a handy diary (a communication book). The parents can also write down here all information that might be useful for the childcare assistant. The childcare assistant writes down the key events in the diary every day. This book is also a useful aide-memoire when it comes to filling in the observation book Look, I am growing up. Nevertheless the diary is no substitute for conversations between the parents and the regular childcare assistant.

Play

Play is the main activity for children at our children's day care centre. The childcare assistant is attentive to every child's interests. He or she offers activities that are tailored to the children's development, also taking into account the atmosphere within the group. There is a lot of variety in the various corners for both baby and toddler groups. Every child needs to have the opportunity to poke around and make mistakes. There is ample scope for motor, sensory, mental, imaginary and creative play. They can play indoors or outdoors, alone, in small groups or all together. They learn to dance, sing and romp. Our first priority is the children's well-being and ensuring that they feel involved.
Celebrating

Celebrating with children is great fun: That is why birthdays, Christmas, carnival time etc. never pass us by unnoticed. Our celebrations are designed to suit young children. Please do not bring individual presents at these festive times.

Feeding

Please do not prepare bottle feeds in advance, since baby food should only be prepared immediately before use (see Info Folder, which you will be given at the first taster session). Children who arrive after 7.00 are expected to have had breakfast at home. The toddlers have their midday meal at around 11.00. Teatime and fruit is at about 15.00. Bottle feed, vegetable puree and fruit puree are given at your baby's feeding times. It is possible to breastfeed in the children's day care centre if you wish.

Our meals are provided by ALMA. As an information for the parents the menu cycle is posted on the notice board. You can also consult it on the website.

Special meals are only prepared by doctor's prescription or on religious grounds. You should contact the team leader if you wish to make arrangements for this. Special dietary products should be brought in by parents together with the required medical background information.

Washing and dressing

Children should be brought to the children's day care centre washed and dressed. They have their bath at home. Please provide enough spare clothes for your child so that he/she can play outside, too. Toddlers may need a pair of Wellington boots. Every child has an individual space to store personal items.

Bibs, towels, flannels and bedclothes (except sleeping bags for babies) are available in the children's day care centre.

In our children's day care centres we use liquid soap, nappy cream from the pharmacy, toilet milk and sun cream. The brand and ingredients of these projects may vary. If you require more information, please contact the team leader. If your child has allergies or needs specific products, please bring these to the children's day care centre yourself, together with written permission from your doctor. You should discuss this with the team leader.

Changing nappies is not only hygienic, but it is also an opportunity for the child to have a cuddle with their regular childcare assistant. For organisational and hygiene reasons, the children's day care centre uses its own disposable nappies (no reusable nappies). Older toddlers go on the potty when they are ready to do so, after discussion with their parents.
Sleep

Babies sleep whenever they need to. They each have their own bed in the bedroom. If necessary (because they are restless, not feeling well or wake up quickly) they can sometimes sleep in a separate room, if there are facilities for this.
For babies we ask you to bring in a sleeping bag for safety reasons (preventing cot death). A small cuddly toy is allowed. Large comfort blankets (blanket or sheet) and sleeping on their tummy increases the risk of cot death. This is therefore only allowed with a medical prescription. Sleep monitoring is possible if requested by a doctor.
The toddlers sleep as a group from 12.00 to about 14.00. Each toddler has his own place for sleeping and sleeps with his or her own cuddly toy. To avoid disturbing the children, we ask parents not to drop off or collect children during this period.

Collecting your child

When the parents come to collect their child, they have a chat with their childcare assistant about how the day has gone. He/she tells them how the child has been that day; he/she will mention things that went well and also things that did not go so well. Through these conversations everyday contacts can develop into good, collaborative child-rearing.
Sharing information well helps the parents and the child to grow in confidence.
It is important for parents to make time for a brief chat. The childcare assistant will also see this as a sign of appreciation. NB: when children are with us during extended care hours, the childcare assistant in charge at these times is not the same one as during the day, so only the strictly necessary information will be passed on.

The children's day care centre will only entrust the children to the parents or to a person named by them. In the Agreement and in the diary the parents have an opportunity to name individuals who are allowed to collect the child. We must be informed immediately of any changes. If someone else comes to collect your child in an exceptional case, please make a note of this in your diary. We will then check their identity card.

3.2 Medical information

Your child's health is very important. We therefore ask you always to give us clear and honest information about this.
Any medical problems that are not immediately visible may be a hazard for our childcare assistants (for example if they are pregnant) or may require special vigilance. To protect our staff and other children and avoid unnecessary risks as far as possible, please report these problems to the team leader.

Most of the leadership teams include a nurse. If not, the team leader who is present will still have attended a full First Aid course and is also able to consult her colleagues if needed. A doctor will of course be called if necessary. The medical quality coordinator from Kind en Gezin (Child and Family) is available to advise us on preventative health care and on your child's
physical and psychomotor development. We strongly recommend that you have your child vaccinated in accordance with the Kind en Gezin (Child and Family) vaccination programme. If you do not do this, please let us know.

Sick children

If a child becomes sick during the day, the necessary care will be provided.
- We will inform the parents by telephone so that they can make an appointment with their doctor if necessary and make arrangements for the coming days. If necessary we will ask the parents to come and collect their child.

- If a child has a high fever (> 38.5 degrees), if there is a risk of infection or if there are other symptoms as described in the Infectious Diseases folder, the child must stay at home. The *Infectious Diseases Folder for children's day care centres produced by Kind en Gezin (Child and Family)* is used to decide whether or not your child is allowed to remain at the children's day care centre. Please ensure that your child definitely does not have a fever for 24 hours before returning to the creche. We would also ask parents not to give antipyretic medications to their children in the morning before bringing them to the creche. Fever is a sign that your child is not feeling well. It is better to give your child time to recover completely rather than returning him/her to the group too quickly. This also allows us to prevent other children from becoming infected and avoid the yo-yo effect: poorly, a little better, poorly again etc.

- In the event of an emergency or accident the team leader will call the 100 emergency service immediately or take your child together with his/her childcare assistant to the emergency department at Gasthuisberg or Heilig Hart hospital. The parents are always informed as soon as possible. Parents will be asked to pay for any transportation costs.

If your child is sick and cannot come to the children's day care centre:

- Please inform us before 8.30. This is necessary for organisational reasons and also because the team leader needs to be aware of any infectious conditions. If we are not informed of the absence, you will be charged for one-third of a day.
- Information about the 'Home care for sick children' service (a service provided for K.U. Leuven staff) is available on our website and also below.

Administering medication

As a rule no medication is administered at the children's day care centre. Please ask your doctor preferably to prescribe medications that you can administer yourself in the mornings and evenings wherever possible.

In exceptional cases, medication and medical care can be administered to your child at the children's day care centre. In these cases written permission from your doctor is always needed.

Kind en Gezin (Child and Family) does not allow us to administer suppositories. In the event of high fever, a single dose of antipyretic medication can be given orally, if we have the parents' permission for this in writing. This form is usually completed at registration. We will always discuss the situation with the parents by telephone beforehand. In addition, only physiological
saline drops and nappy ointment from the chemist's can be used without a doctor's prescription, always at the parents' request.

Inhalers can only be given with a medical prescription, and only once per day. We ask parents to bring in the device and the medication themselves.

### 3.3 Extra services

#### Home care for sick children for K.U. Leuven staff

'Home care for sick children' was created to allow sick children to be looked after while relaxing in their own familiar surroundings. It also reduces the risk of infection within the children's day care centre and allows your child to recover more quickly.

If your child is sick you can request this service at any time, although that does not mean that it will always be possible to help you. A medical certificate is always required.

Care at home is provided by specially trained childcare assistants from the children's day care centres or other carers. At peak times we may ask for help from other care providers. People not professionally linked to K.U. Leuven can access a similar service via their health insurer.

More information and the relevant forms are available in the *Info folder or on our website*.

#### Out-of-school care

If your child goes to nursery school, there is a limited care service on Wednesday afternoons from 12.00 (only at Peutertuin), with priority given to children from Peutertuin. During the school holidays your child is welcome at Peutertuin and Kabouterberg. A nursery teacher and/or childcare assistants will look after these 3 to 6 year olds.

To ensure that the children enjoy the service as much as possible, we provide appropriate activities, divide them into smaller groups, show videos, use a large playground etc.

Since we can only accommodate a limited number of children, priority is given to brothers and sisters of children in the Peutertuin and Kabouterberg children's day care centres.

For organisational reasons it is necessary to register well in advance. Availability of a place needs to be confirmed. Please contact the team leader for information about this.

#### Cover day care

On certain days (see the *Closing days* sheet) we provide a limited cover day care service at Kabouterberg. Cover day care is always an *emergency solution*.

As a result we cannot guarantee that the child will be with his/her regular carer or care group. In the interests of the child and for organisational reasons, children who need special care cannot be accommodated at these times.

For organisational reasons it is necessary to register well in advance and wait for confirmation that a place is available. You can register for the cover day care service on our website. An employer's certificate is required for both parents for each period of time requested. Ask the team leader for more details.
Flexible care

Subject to the child's ability to cope and if you have an employer's certificate, we can also offer flexible care at Kabouterberg and Kabouters (from 6.15 to 20.15)
IV  FINANCIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

4.1  Parent Contribution

The team leader will give you the latest information on the calculation system that is used and the discounts that are granted (see enclosure). You can also calculate your own parent contribution at www.kindengezin.be or via the Kind en Gezin (Child and Family) child care line on 078 150 100.

Parent contributions are set in accordance with the Ministerial Decree of 17 March 2008. To calculate the parent contributions we need:
- a copy of your latest tax return
- proof of membership from your health insurer (if more than one child)

Reductions in the daily rate are provided for:
1/2 day = attending for a maximum of 5 hours (60% of the daily rate)
1/3 day = attending for a maximum of 3 hours (40% of the daily rate)
If there is no proof of income, the maximum rate will be charged. This documentation must be received by the end of the first month of day care, otherwise the maximum rate will be charged.

Each year the parent contribution is recalculated on 1 October, based on your latest tax return. You will then receive a letter showing the parent contribution that has been calculated for you. If you wish to appeal to the management against your new parent contribution, you have one month to do so.

For the period between 1 October 2010 and 30 September 2011 the rate for each day of care ranges from € 1.45 to € 25.87.

How is the rate actually set?

The rate is set by law. It depends on:
- the income of (the) (both) parent(s).
- the number of hours your child spends at the day care centre each day
- the number of dependent children you have
1.1 your personal or joint income

If you are married or living together, both incomes are counted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What documents can you use as evidence?</th>
<th>What is used in the calculation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| If you have a Belgian tax return from the tax authorities:  
  - child care begins between 1 October 2010 and 30 September 2011, the 2009 tax year for income in 2008  
  Lost your tax return? Ask for a duplicate! | - the figure under 'joint taxable income from employment'  
  - if there is no 'income from employment' on your tax return, use the figure shown for 'joint taxable income' |
| If you do not have a Belgian tax return or if it does not show any income, you can submit a payslip or receipt from RVA (National Unemployment Service), RIZIV (National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance) or OCMW (Public Social Welfare Centre) | the income for the month when child care begins |
| You are newly self-employed or working as an assisting spouse, so you do not have a tax return yet. | a 'theoretical income' set by the National Social Security Fund for the Self-Employed |
| You do not provide evidence of your family income by submitting a tax return, a pay slip or a receipt from RVA, RIZIV or OCMW. | No evidence of income can be used. In that case you will pay the maximum price of € 25.87 per day of care. |

1.2 the number of hours your child spends at the day care centre each day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How long is your child in day care each day?</th>
<th>How much of the daily rate do you pay?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from 5 hours to less than 12 hours</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from 3 hours to less than 5 hours</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 3 hours</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 hours or more</td>
<td>160%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The following hours can be added together:
  - the hours a child spends at the day care centre throughout the day. Example: your child attends the day care centre for 1 hour before school and then attends for another 3 hours in the afternoon: you pay for 4 hours of day care.
  - the hours spent at the day care centre for a child who attends the day care centre for less than 1 hour per day during 1 week
- The minimum amount is always € 1.45. The minimum amount is € 2.32 if:
  - a child is in day care for more than 12 hours in one day
  - a child is in day care for a consecutive day and night
  - This minimum rate is not applicable if free day care is offered under a social tariff for a family in exceptional circumstances. (The social tariff is only applicable in an approved children's day care centre, in a local neighbourhood child care service or with a childminder who is registered with a childminding service).
1.3 The number of dependent children

- You receive a discount of € 2.93 for each additional dependent child.
  - Example: you have three children. You will receive a discount of € 5.86 (2 x € 2.93) per day on the price calculated for each child attending the day care centre.
- If you have twins, triplets, etc. you receive an additional € 2.93 discount.
  - Example: You have three children, including twins. You will receive a discount of € 8.79 (2 x € 2.93 + € 2.93) per day for each child attending the day care centre.
- NB:
  - You only receive these discounts for children who are part of your household for at least one-third of the time.
  - If the number of dependent children increases, you will receive the discount starting on the first day of the month after you report this.
  - There is no extra discount for a child with a disability.

How is the price calculated in a joint custody arrangement?

If the children live alternately with you and your ex-partner under a joint custody arrangement and you both use the children's day care centre, two prices are calculated:

- the price based on your situation
- the price based on your ex-partner's situation

Is it possible to pay a social rate or receive a reimbursement?

- If you are in financial difficulty, the children's day care centre may decide to charge a social rate. This social rate amounts to 75%, 50%, 25% of the price as calculated or the minimum contribution. In very exceptional cases they may decide that you do not need to pay anything at all.

- If you are a jobseeker on a training course arranged or approved by the VDAB (Flemish Employment and Vocational Training Agency), the VDAB will reimburse your child care costs. Further information is available from the VDAB via:
  - the website
  - the freephone number 0800 30 700, every working day from 8.00 to 20.00
  - e-mail: info@vdab.be
When is the day care rate changed?

1. Annual adjustment

The rate is adjusted on 1 October each year.

2. Discount if your current income has fallen by at least 20%

If your current household income falls by at least 20%, the rate will be changed. The children's day care centre will adjust the rate starting on the first day of the month following notification.

3. Change in the rate if there is a change in the number of dependent children

If the number of dependent children increases, you will receive an extra discount from the first day of the month following notification.

4. Change in the rate if there is a change in your household composition

If there is a change in your official household composition, the rate will be recalculated from the first day of the month after you notify us of the change. This relates to changes affecting those who are responsible for the child, for example a divorce, a death, a marriage, moving in to live together etc.

Parents also pay a contribution towards the following specific costs incurred in day care:

- use of nappies (20 cents per nappy, at a rate of 5 nappies for a whole day)
- a charge is made for a hot meal when staying for less than 3 hours (in addition to the day care rate)
- exceptional but necessary expenses incurred for a child, where an explanation is provided, e.g. an urgent visit to the doctor

Parents may have to pay a penalty charge in the following situations:

- unexpected absences which have not been announced or not announced early enough (i.e. after 8.30)
- systematically, over a period of two months, using the children's care centre less than was agreed in the child care plan, if the parents do not agree to a contract review
- collection costs when payments are made late

The amount of these penalty payments is equal to the parent contribution to be paid for the days in question as stated in the child care plan.
4.2 **Method of payment**

Every month, before the 15th day of the month, the parents will receive a detailed bill for the previous month. The monthly payment must be made by direct debit. If not, parents undertake to pay the bill (day care costs for the previous month) within seven calendar days of receipt, by bank transfer or in cash.

In the event of late payment, the parents will be given a written reminder. In the event of repeated late payments or non-payment the children's day care centre will terminate child care and may charge additional collection costs. The day care will be terminated and additional costs will be charged if the parent contribution that is due has not been paid for more than two months. The amount of the additional costs will correspond to the costs actually incurred in collecting the parent contributions that are due.

Explanation of billing:

- The registration fee, to secure a reserved place, is € 75 and will be refunded when the last bill has been paid.

- We use disposable nappies (p. 18). The prices for products and waste disposal are:
  
  - per full day: € 1
  - per half day: € 0.60
  - or per one-third day: € 0.40
  - for 1 nappy for toddlers: € 0.20

  These costs are charged monthly.

- The observation book 'Look, I am growing up' is charged with your first bill (€ 6.57).

- Other: .......................................................... ..........................................................
4.3 **Tax certificate**

You can deduct child care costs for children aged up to 12 on your tax return up to a specified maximum amount. The children's day care centre undertakes to provide you with a correctly completed tax certificate in time every year.

4.4 **Termination arrangements**

You can terminate your child's day care prematurely (e.g. if you move house) by notifying the team leader in writing at least two months in advance. If you do not give notice as stated above, the parent contribution that is due according to the day care plan will be charged for one extra month.

The children's day care centre may cancel your child's day care unilaterally by registered letter (stating the reason and indicating the date when this takes effect) if, after a verbal and written warning, the parents have not complied with the Regulations or the Agreement.
AGREEMENT

The children's day care centres of Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, de Croylaan 8, 3001 Heverlee, represented by Ms Barbara Vrijdags, Director and
Mr and/or Ms
resident at
have agreed the following 1:

- The children's day care centres undertake to guarantee a place for your child 2 in

The expected date of birth is

They will reserve a place for your child in the care group starting on

To secure your place we will expect your child to attend from

for at least a few days (full, half or one-third) each week. This is partly for organisational reasons and partly as a taster.

- The parents undertake to comply with the day care plan set out below.

(full day = X  morning = M  afternoon = A  one-third day = T)

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday
starting time finishing time

For an irregular child care plan, please state the number of days:

X:  M:  A:  T:

- The child may be collected by:

Both parties declare that they will comply with the terms and conditions of the Regulations set out in This is how we do things and the Agreement.

Date

Barbara Vrijdags Director

…………………

………………….…………………..

…………………

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1 Subject to changes in the current regulations governing approval and subsidies.

2 In exceptional circumstances, day care may be provided at one of our other children's day care centres.

"The signature of the parent(s) must be preceded by the words 'read and approved'.

K.U. Leuven Children's Day Care Centres - Regulations and Agreement