

### **How can the childcare institution support the educational skills of the child?**

Every child is supported attentively in his/her own learning process. Systematic observation and documentation are the foundations for dialogue with the child. The materials chosen and the design of the room have a stimulating effect on the child. They promote the child's curiosity and stimulate independent and cooperative action.

### **What influence do parents have?**

Mothers and fathers are responsible for the education and upbringing of their children. While your child is at the childcare centre you receive support in this from the staff there. A positive cooperating relationship is established by regular meetings, reliable agreements, mutual exchange of information and by clarifying the educational goals. The documentation of the educational process of your child is an excellent opportunity to communicate with each other. The participation regulations of the Childcare Centre Law form the framework for communication, which then has to be agreed in detail.

### **What does the childcare staff do?**

The childcare staff also sees itself as "life-long learners"; they consult with colleagues and regularly participate in advanced training to obtain qualifications in their own didactic area. The childcare staff runs and organises the childcare institution like a research centre. They draw on the curiosity and inquisitive nature of children in constant dialogue to develop an interest in their topics. They encourage children to ask questions and thereby broaden both the child's and their educational horizons. They create an environment in which the child feels happy and safe, and create personal relationships with the individual children. The childcare staff negotiates rules of behaviour with the children and develops and encourages social skills.

They observe and document the progress of each child, ensure they have new stimulating experiences and stay in touch with their parents.

Information on child day care in the Federal State of Brandenburg can be found online at:

[www.mbjs.brandenburg.de/kita-startseite.htm](http://www.mbjs.brandenburg.de/kita-startseite.htm)



## **The principles of elementary education**

How do young children learn?

Grundsätze Elementarer Bildung –  
Wie lernen kleine Kinder?

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### Dear parents,

Young children are explorers, artists and designers and learn the whole day long. Childcare centres should give them the support they need to fully develop their personality and skills.

Our image of children has changed fundamentally in recent years. Now we know that children already have an innate ability to learn from the world

around them. Children are curious by nature. Every child wants to learn, research, experiment and discover the world. It is our responsibility to support them, encourage them and to maintain their curiosity. Curiosity and interest motivate children to learn, to perform well at school and at work.

Recent research has proven that children learn best by doing and by being allowed to experience things themselves. Learning is an individual life process. Each child learns in a different way and develops his/her own learning strategies. Teaching, instructions and competence training have only a minor effect, if they do not appeal to the interests of the children. It is therefore not just the love and appreciation of children which motivates us to make the children's thirst for knowledge the starting point of the education, but also the knowledge that educational work can only be successful by doing so.

The first and most important source of experience and the first and most important place of education is the family. Mothers and fathers, grandparents and siblings are the first role models and learning partners of children. Childcare centres and schools build on the children's learning experiences in their family, and supplement these experiences. Childcare centres open up a new world to children that offers new relationships with adults and children as well as lots of new experiences. As parents you still remain the most important people in the world for your children. As a result, a lot depends on your cooperation with the childcare staff.

This information sheet is intended to introduce you to the key principles of our child day care. "The principles of elementary education in child day care institutions in Brandenburg" are a framework which was developed jointly with the providers of childcare centres. The aim is to ensure that all children in childcare centres in Brandenburg receive a good elementary education. In a joint

declaration, the service provider associations made it clear that this framework forms the basis for their activities at childcare centres. A wide range of providers already accepted the principles of elementary education as the binding basis of their work long ago. More and more childcare centres are using these principles and developing holistic educational offers, encouraging children to become active and to gain musical and creative experience. This encourages the children's learning process.

Dr. Martina Münch  
Minister for Education, Youth and Sport  
of the Federal State of Brandenburg

### The principles of elementary education

The "Principles of elementary education" encourage providers and specialists to provide children with experience in different areas of education, and to support and challenge them didactically.

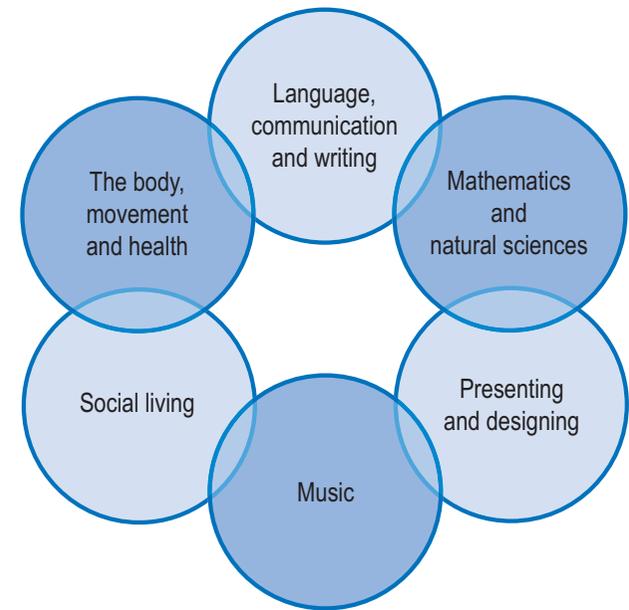
The principles are a framework which the institutions – in accordance with their own profile and concept – bring to life in their everyday work. They are not a programme to be worked through, and the areas of education are not school subjects. Imagine the principles and the areas of education described more like a map. This map describes areas to be discovered, unknown people and things as well as secrets to be researched. In her book "A Seven-Year-Old's Knowledge of the World" (Das Weltwissen der Siebenjährigen), Donata Elschenbroich writes that education is about unearthing the treasure of early childhood. The "Principles of elementary education" are the treasure map for this.

### How do young children learn?

From birth on, children actively form their own image of the world. Children innately possess extensive learning abilities. However, the way a child develops these skills mainly depends on the educational opportunities their environment offers. The first sources of early education are the parents and the family environment.

The job of child day care institutions is to offer additional stimulating educational opportunities. The childcare staff enters into a dialogue with the children and works together with them to broaden their horizons. The starting point for the teaching process is the natural curiosity of children, the child's urge to examine and to discover.

### Six equivalent areas of education are described:



### What are the areas of education?

The thematically structured areas of education correspond to the child's existing competences. They focus the attention of the childcare staff on different topics and provide a framework for didactic concepts at the childcare institution. They are used to plan and evaluate didactic work and support the specific observation and encouragement of the learning process of each individual child.

The areas of education do not define clearly separate subjects. They have nothing to do with school subjects in the general sense. No particular work is required from the child, but the childcare centre is encouraged to provide stimuli in these areas. The areas of education intersect: What use would experience in and with nature be, if a child cannot describe these experiences in words or pictures? How can rhythms be experienced if a child does not move? Good teaching practices can only be established if the areas of education interact.