

# **Kinderhaus Knirps & Co - Our guideline against discrimination and in favour of respect, tolerance and appreciation**

*Status 27/09/2024 Version 1.0,*

The university's Knirps & Co. children's centre stands for respect, tolerance, appreciation, international diversity and anti-discrimination - these principles are reflected in the structures, processes and interactions, in the pedagogical attitude of the staff and in everyday life at the children's centre. The pedagogical management, the team of specialists, the management and the board of the sponsoring organisation are actively committed to this. They create a stimulating and diverse environment in which the children can develop their full potential and grow into responsible, empathetic and self-confident people.

This guideline describes the principles and attitude in the children's centre, the measures for prevention, the concrete procedure in a case, as well as the continuous further development of this guideline and the corresponding quality standards.

## **1. Principles and attitude in the children's home**

We, the educational management, the team of professionals, the management and the board of the sponsoring organisation, promote an environment that is as inclusive and non-discriminatory as possible in our respective areas of responsibility. We organise the framework conditions in such a way that an atmosphere can be created in which all children, parents and employees feel accepted and valued regardless of their origin, religion, gender, social status, physical and mental abilities or other individual characteristics.

### **1.1 Diversity and inclusion**

We see diversity as enrichment. We also want to convey this attitude to the children. We therefore act in such a way that every child is recognised in its individuality.

We treat all children and their families equally. No one should be discriminated against based on origin, religion, gender, social status, physical or mental abilities or other personal characteristics.

We promote fair dealings with one another and an inclusive culture. Our interactions are characterised by respect, empathy and tolerance.

We see different living environments, perspectives and prerequisites as learning opportunities and consciously integrate them into our educational work.

## 1.2 Anti-discrimination

Discrimination is a massive violation of personal rights. To prevent this from happening, we implement preventative measures and promote open, transparent and respectful communication. If discriminatory behaviour or incidents nevertheless occur at the Kinderhaus, we take them seriously and take steps to investigate and clarify them so that they do not occur again.

The involvement of parents is crucial in order to develop a common stance against discrimination and to strengthen the trust between the children's home and the families. We encourage everyone involved in the children's centre to report discrimination.

## 1.3 Forms of discrimination

Discrimination is always a disadvantage along an (ascribed) identity characteristic and always takes place within an unequal power relationship - it is therefore irreversible.

Discrimination is not always intentional. Even if something was meant differently, not known or misunderstood - the decisive factor is the impact on those affected.

Possible forms of discrimination are racism, ableism, sexism, anti-Semitism, classism or adultism (for an explanation, see the brochure *Impulses for anti-discriminatory changes in daycare centres*<sup>1</sup>). We are resolutely opposed to all forms of discrimination.

## 2. Prevention

### 3.1 Quality management

The pedagogical approach and the quality standards derived from it are binding for all professionals and are continuously reflected upon, discussed and expanded with the pedagogical team. The quality standards are regularly reviewed for prejudice-related content and supplemented with regard to anti-discrimination and inclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://arbeitundleben.de/images/download/Kita-gerecht-Broschuere-Impulse-von-Arbeit-und-Life.pdf>

The teaching staff develop a quality standard on anti-discrimination that guides the actions of the entire team. This contains cross-references to the quality standards for inclusion and child protection, for example.

### 3.1 Staff training

Specialist staff receive regular training on topics such as anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion. This training is mandatory and an integral part of the quality development of the childcare centre. The aim of these measures is to sensitise all staff to discriminatory behaviour and statements, to ensure that incidents are dealt with appropriately in educational terms and to promote an anti-discriminatory and inclusive attitude that underpins the decisions, actions and materials used in the children's home.

### 3.2 Role model function

The staff act as role models and actively contribute to promoting a positive and inclusive atmosphere. Discriminatory behaviour, discriminatory language and discriminatory gestures have no place in the Kinderhaus.

### 3.2 Promoting empathy and social skills

We promote empathy and social skills in the children through targeted educational programmes. This is done through role-playing games, stories, songs and projects that reflect the diversity of people in an appreciative and, as far as possible, stereotype-free manner. In everyday life at the daycare centre, the children's emotions are addressed and named by the staff. In this way, the children learn that everyone experiences and expresses situations individually, which is a prerequisite for compassion and empathy. In conflict situations, all persons involved are treated equally and a solution is worked out together.

If situations arise that contradict the aforementioned principles, the professionals teach the children that, on the one hand, everyone has a need for individual fulfilment and belonging and, on the other, that the need for equality applies to everyone. In addition, how painful discrimination and marginalisation is for those affected.

### 3.3 Parental work

Parents are regularly reminded of the principles of the Knirps & Co children's centre, which are respect, tolerance, appreciation and anti-discrimination. These principles can be found on the website and are part of the pedagogical concept. All new parents receive an information pack at the first information afternoon.

Introduction to our approach to diversity and prejudice-conscious education. On the website, parents can see where they can go in the event of discriminatory behaviour and how further procedures are structured.

If discriminatory behaviour occurs at the children's home, parents of the children concerned are supported in responding appropriately to their children and addressing the issue if necessary. The involvement of parents plays a central role in order not to unsettle the children, to develop a common attitude and to strengthen trust in the centre.

### **3. Procedure in a discrimination case**

If there are incidents of discriminatory behaviour, there are defined procedures for clarification and processing that are transparent and understandable for everyone involved.

#### **a) Contact point for discrimination**

The first point of contact for anyone who observes discriminatory behaviour is the pedagogical director (or their deputy) of the Kinderhaus.

This responsibility is communicated on the website and at information events organised by the Kinderhaus.

Parents and professionals are encouraged to report discriminatory behaviour without fear of negative consequences. The report can be made in person, in writing (e.g. via a letterbox) or digitally.

#### **b) Reporting an incident involving children**

If the incident takes place in the observing person's own group, they inform the team of professionals in this group and the head of the day-care centre in a protected room (without any children present).

If the incident takes place in a group not belonging to the observing person, the observing person informs the childcare centre management.

The leader contacts the team of the group in question and discusses the next steps. These include working through, developing and organising the topic with the children.

If the behaviour is clearly discriminatory based on origin, appearance, gender, physical disability or age, the group staff will first inform the parents of the children concerned and the management. In consultation between the management, the group team and the parents concerned, all

Parents of the group or possibly all parents in the childcare centre are informed about the incident and the activities that have taken place and are planned.

c) Reporting an incident between adults

If an incident is observed by another adult (another professional, parents, other people in the childcare centre), the person observing the incident informs the management. The management informs the board.

The management discusses the next steps with the Executive Board. A statement on the incident is requested, which is treated confidentially.

d) Reporting an incident in connection with an external offer/cooperation

If the incident takes place as part of an external service, a (research) project or a collaboration, the management and the Executive Board are informed. The Executive Board will take over further clarification with the organisation or person offering the service. For this purpose, a statement on the incident as well as the clarification measures of the organisation or person is requested, which is treated confidentially. On this basis, the Executive Board decides on the continuation of the service or cooperation. The management clarifies the further procedure in the groups with the team.

e) Responsibility

If children or professionals are involved in the situation, the management takes over the clarification and thus the responsibility. If the management deems it appropriate or if it is requested by the persons involved, the responsibility and further clarification of each incident is handed over to the board.

If the situation involves bodies or offers that the Executive Board has decided on, the Executive Board assumes the clarification and thus the responsibility. The Executive Board clarifies who is responsible within the Executive Board. Ideally, this should be two people.

In all other cases (e.g. if parents are involved or positions or offers that the board has not decided on), the management and the board agree on who will take over the clarification.

#### f) Situation analysis

Once the report has been received, the responsible office conducts an initial meeting with the persons involved in order to clarify the incident, the intention and the effect. This involves analysing the situation (Who was present? Which children, which adults? Where and when did it take place? What exactly happened (behaviour) and what happened as a result (effect)?) and hypotheses about the cause (What were the children/people trying to achieve? What is the need behind it? What did the person want to say? Are there people who feel hurt by this?) All those involved are given the opportunity to present their point of view. The incident is documented objectively and without judgement. If necessary, external experts (e.g. anti-discrimination agencies, counselling centres, mediation) are consulted. The documentation is treated confidentially.

#### g) Action plan

Based on the analysis and documentation, an action plan is developed to deal with the incident and prevent recurrences. This plan can include, for example, educational measures, discussions with those involved, structural changes or public relations work. The defined steps are implemented promptly and consistently.

#### h) Parental involvement

The parents of the children directly involved will be informed about the incident and the planned measures in a confidential discussion. Care is taken to ensure that communication is respectful and factual and, in particular, no individual children, families or persons are named or singled out. The aim is to explain the situation, outline how the children's home has dealt with the incident and take the parents' point of view into account.

Parents are invited to actively participate in the development and implementation of prevention measures.

#### i) Protection of personal rights

Throughout the entire process - especially in the action plan and in the event of a complaint - the personal rights of all persons involved are respected. Personal statements or accusations are not made public, but only documented confidentially as part of the situation analysis if necessary. The entire procedure is aimed at strengthening awareness of diversity and respectful interaction with one another.

j) Evaluation and reflection

After a set period of time, reflection meetings are held with the parties concerned to evaluate the impact of the measures and adjust them if necessary. The aim is to ensure that the discriminatory behaviour no longer occurs. Observations, conversations or feedback from the professionals are used for this purpose. All parties involved pay attention to the children's reactions in the following period and report further behaviour if necessary. The entire process is documented.

## 5. Further development

The guideline and the quality standard on anti-discrimination are regularly reviewed for their applicability and further developed. Feedback from children, parents, professionals and external partners is taken into account to ensure that the Kinderhaus always remains a safe and inclusive place.

The Kinderhaus regularly exchanges information on anti-discrimination and diversity with the university's specialist centres. The Kinderhaus works together with external specialist departments that specialise in topics such as anti-discrimination and inclusion. This serves the continuous further development of educational practice.

*The guideline was developed by the Board of Directors and the pedagogical management of the children's centre and adopted by the Board of Directors in October 2024.*