



I **GENERAL**

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel has two day care centres.

in ELSENE located at Generaal Jacqueslaan 141, 1050 Brussels,

Tel. 02/648.38.75

Fax 02/649.94.87

e-mail : kinderdagverblijven@vub.ac.be

in JETTE located on the campus of the University Hospital VUB
Laarbeeklaan 109, 1090 Brussels (Jette)

Tel. 02/477 48 11 or 02/477 48 13

Fax 02/477 48. 10

e-mail : kinderdagverblijven@vub.ac.be

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Frieda FIERS

May be contacted by e-mail Kinderdagverblijven@vub.ac.be

or by telephone if urgent at [0476/544 842](tel:0476544842)

LOCAL MANAGERS:

in Jette: Karine Bilterest
Eveline Bischof
Sarah Henry

in Elsene: Christine Merckx
Monika Zivkovic
Daniëlla Vanhaverbeke

At least one of the managers may be contacted from 08:30 to 19:00.

Within the university the day care centres come:

as regards operation, administration and personnel under the authority of the
CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION directed by Personnel Director Mr. J. Veny.

For the day care centre in Jette this is arranged in close consultation with the
University Hospital "UZ Brussel".

Target group

The day care centre provides day care for children before they go to pre-school.

The service provided by the VUB day care centres is open to all children.

As provided for in the Flanders Government Decree of 23.02.2001 concerning
the conditions for recognition and subsidising day care centres, we give
admission priority to children:



- a) Whose parents have work circumstances preventing them from looking after their children themselves during the day.
- b) For whom it is desirable for social and/or educational reasons to be given day care and support outside the family.
- c) Whose parents have the lowest incomes.
- d) Of single parents

Children of personnel and students linked with the university association (VUB and Erasmus College) and employees of the University Hospital in Jette have priority.

In addition to the foregoing summary the criterion “resident in the neighbourhood” is additionally taken into account for when allocating places.

It is advisable to make your application early, preferably before the end of the fourth month of pregnancy. Special situations may be taken into consideration for late but valid applications.

Capacity

VUB day care centres have enough space to care for 180 children between the ages of 0 and 3 years:

110 children in Jette, 70 children in Elsene

Opening hours

Every working day in Jette from 06:30 to 7 p.m., on demand also after 7 p.m. until 10 p.m.

in Elsene from 07:30 to 7 p.m., on demand also after 7 o'clock until 8.30 p.m.

In principle the day care centre in Jette is open throughout the year.

The annual closure of the day care centre in Elsene is traditionally the first two weeks of August and the week between Christmas and New Year.

The dates of the closure dates are announced each year no later than in the month of January by means of a personal note accompanying the invoice.

Additionally both of the day care centres close for at least one day for the purpose of annual training.

These dates are announced at least two months in advance.

Recognition by Kind&Gezin

VUB day care centres are recognised and subsidised by Kind&Gezin, the Belgian national childcare organisation. This means that the ultimate responsibility for quality and management of the day care centres lies both with the university and the organising administration. Supervising the quality requirements within the framework of guaranteeing quality assurance resides with Kind&Gezin.



Language

Dutch is the language used in dealings with children and parents.

Where necessary in specific situations and for proper comprehension English or French will be spoken with parents.

Accessibility of a contact in urgent cases.

If it proves impossible to make contact with either the managers or the department head, then in urgent cases you may approach:

For the day care centre **Elsene:**

VUB security dept

24 hours a day, tel.: **02.629.21.76**

For the day care centre **Jette:**

VUB University Hospital security dept

24 hours a day, tel.: **02.477.41.41**

How to apply

Applications to register may be made by:

- e-mail to Kinderdagverblijven@vub.ac.be
- telephone to the location concerned
- or in person by appointment

By any of these means you will then receive the:

- registration form
- rules and regulations
- document concerning the vision of how we function in respect of children and parents

These documents give you information about how we function and help you decide on whether to entrust your child to us.

During this initial contact the next steps in the procedure will be explained straight away according to the admission wish.

Formally the admission possibility will only be examined once the completed registration form has been returned.

Making an application does not yet mean with certainty that your child will be allocated a place in the day care centre.

However, it does mean that you wish to be considered for a place and wish to be kept informed of the admission possibilities.

Deciding the desired time of admission when making your application

When deciding the time of admission of your child, we would ask you to allow for

- maternity leave
- any other additional special or normal leave.

This desired admission date will fall in a particular month.



State that month (or any specific date envisaged) on your registration form.

Confirmation of registration

We will send you a document confirming receipt of your application document in writing or by e-mail.

Admission policy

Admission possibilities are dependent on the:

- number of places that come free during the desired period.
Consequently there is a possibility that we may have to ask parents to postpone the admission for a few weeks
- selection criteria provided for (see target group p. 2).

A response regarding the possibility for admission will be given no later than 6 months prior to admission in writing in the form of an admission confirmation letter.

Consultation by e-mail and/or telephone usually precedes this.

The response may be:

1. you have a place starting from the desired date
2. you have a place but subject to a postponement of ... weeks.
3. for the time being you do not have a place
4. you do not have a place.

The day care centre expects **confirmation in writing** from the parents if they agree to the admission date (situation 1 & 2).

At that point you will be asked to remit to the day care centre a **reservation deposit of € 50** (see also section IV financial terms, reservation deposit). Your place is then guaranteed.

In situations 3 and 4 further consultation is necessary regarding whether or not the application may be considered.

If following receipt of the confirmation of admission, the admission does not go through or is postponed by the parents by a period exceeding one month, then it will be considered whether the place can be kept open. In this situation the reservation deposit will be retained.

If postponement exceeds two months a new application needs to be made.

The admission is decided

The start of the admission (extensive visit, exchanging information, meeting child care assistant(s), settling-in, etc.) will be clarified as soon as the admission possibility becomes a fact.

The time when your child can start is fixed.

In order to enable you to form an idea of the educational environment in which your child will be growing up over the next few years we will plan:

1. an admission visit 3 weeks or so prior to admission.



2. one or more settling-in times.

The admission visit

In the written confirmation of admission you will be invited to contact us to arrange a time for this visit.

This creates an opportunity for you to get to know us and to introduce your child to us.

The discussion will be held with one of the managers or the department head.

The following points will be covered:

- the necessary record-keeping
- admission plan for your child (see care agreement)
- your child's food and feeding routine
- your child's sleep and sleeping routine
- your child's diary
- health/medication/vaccination/doctor's consultation
- tour of the department
- your input as parent
- some specific points emphasising the day care centre's vision will be explained
- any wishes and thoughts.

At this time you will also be given the opportunity to ask for any clarification about the rules and regulations.

The 'care agreement' with which you acknowledge having familiarised yourself with and also agreed to the content of these rules and regulations will be presented to you for signature either during this admission visit or no later than on the occasion of the settling-in visit.

Settling in

One or two weeks prior to the admission we ask parents to come to the department together with their child. This is important for both parents and child. It allows you and your child to become acquainted with the personnel, the rooms and surroundings where your child will be staying. Above all it also allows you to explain everything you need to personally about your child to the child care assistant or assistants who will soon be caring for your child.

In the case of the baby group we suggest that on the first day you spend at least 4 hours with your child in the department. On your second day you may like to make use of the opportunity during the second settling-in session to leave your child alone for a while (max. 2 hours) in the day care centre. In this way you too can briefly experience the feeling of separation before you finally make the start.

When the time comes for moving up to the mixed age group, about which you will be informed, another brief settling-in period will be provided. This will be



arranged in good time with you so that you can keep a half day or a full day free during this 'moving up' time.

The way in which the settling-in is arranged will be discussed with one of the managers. The different ways are dependent on the possibilities that the parents have to make themselves free.

Regularity is important

In order that we become adequately acquainted with your child to enable us establish a quality level of contact, we set aside a minimum of five half days spread over at least three different days a week.

In consultation with the parents we may also need to limit the admission plan because of a shortage of places.

The admission plan will be decided no later than during the admission visit. Any expectations relating to your specific situation can be discussed.

The child's diary

During the admission visit you will be given a notebook in which you can note down any useful information for the day-to-day care of your child. You can describe here any habits of your little son or daughter that by now you have discovered, relating to sleeping, getting to sleep, eating, being awake, crying and laughing, or any particular interests.

This information is an important guideline for the care assistant to fall back on in the first few days.

In the notebook the care assistant will note the main events relating to your child during his/her stay in the department.

As a parent you may likewise use this notebook for keeping the day care centre informed about everything in the life of your child. Now it becomes a diary. We leave this up to your inventiveness.

One thing is certain though, it is a useful channel for information now, and will become a pleasant memento for later!

Insurance

The day care centre is collectively insured for possible accidents with physical injury. This insurance has been taken out by with ETHIAS by the VUB's Insurance Section.

A report about an accident will be made by one of the managers of the day care centre. The department head will be informed.

The appropriate documents will be completed as soon as possible by the various parties (general practitioner, day care centre and parents) and sent by the manager to the VUB's Insurance Section.

If you have a complaint

You are entitled to have a number of expectations of the care being offered to your child. We would be pleased to consider any general suggestions or tips that



you may have. With any specific questions concerning your child you may go to your child's care assistant or the day-to-day managers. They are after all the ones directly involved.

If the complaint concerns the conduct of the care assistants with you or your child, things that are causing you concern, do not hesitate and discuss it with one of the managers. This will definitely be discussed and recorded (by means of a complaint report letter accompanying the care agreement). The privacy of all parties involved in handling the complaint will certainly be respected. It can also be instructive for all parties.

If for some reason or another this is not possible or difficult, then contact the department head, Mrs. Frieda Fiers. Should she be absent at that particular time in the day care centre involved you can always try to reach her on the mobile phone number or by e-mail.

Twice a year a questionnaire is used for measuring satisfaction among parents. This enables us to get to know a great deal about your expectations and experiences as a parent.

It is also our duty to point out to you the possibility of contacting the Complaints Section of Kind&Gezin, Hallepoortlaan 27, 1060 Brussels. Tel. 02/533.14.14; e-mail: klachtendienst@kindengezin.be

II INTERNAL FUNCTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Principles relating to the educational policy practised

An essential part in the policy relating to the educational functioning of our day care centres is “to create the most favourable level of development and upbringing in a scientifically accountable manner, such that for all children their stay in the day care centre is a valuable complement to their upbringing at home”.

a. internal organisation of age groups

The day care centres work in a “semi-vertical” group structure. That is to say that there are two kinds of age group:

<u>baby group</u>	with children between 0 and <u>+14</u> and 18 months
<u>toddler group</u>	with children between 14 and 18 months and 3 years, formerly known as the “mixed age” group.

Each group has one (with 7 to 8 children) or two (with 12 to 14 children) fulltime child care assistants (formerly called childminders).



The groups with two care assistants are split up into what we call special care children.

Good child care is only possible when there are conditions in place for entering into quality relationships. In other words children only feel safe and secure once they can become emotionally attached to the person who is in charge of them. In the day care centre that is therefore their fulltime care assistant.

You will meet your child's care assistant during the admission visit and the settling-in.

In our day care centres **babies** are looked after according to their own routine. The individual routine in terms of feeding and rest is observed for each child. With babies we also find it very important to respond to the basic need of physical comfort. Children that cry are comforted in the manner that makes it possible to respond to it.

You can describe your little child's habits, feeding situation, sleep ritual and overall routine associated with this in the child's diary provided for the purpose.

The move up to the toddler group is decided by the day care centre managers. They will discuss this with your child's care assistant. An opportunity will be found to discuss this with you. The new department's care assistant will explain to you how the toddler group functions. The new settling-in time also serves here.

With the toddlers a fixed timetable system is observed. Here the care provision is essentially collective as regards normal eating and sleeping times. Yet at least as much attention is paid to each child's individual level of welfare.

We vouch for this by seeing to it that, in terms of children numbers, the group is kept small by splitting it up by special care children.

This enables your child to be offered the maximum of experience opportunities, something that may be seen in the range of activities and play materials appropriate to the ages.

The surroundings where your child stays together with his/her care assistant not only provides a snug and secure feeling but also the necessary elements for exploration, play and activity.

Activities of the day are noted in an open binder kept at the department entrance and possibly clarified verbally by the care assistant.

b. cooperating with and supporting personnel

We are convinced of the importance of the fact that the working conditions for and the atmosphere in which the personnel come to work should be of such a nature that they create the highest possible level of work satisfaction. It is a precondition for us being able to respond in a quality manner to the



expectations that we want to meet of parents and children who are calling on our help.

An essential factor in fulfilling this aim is achieving communication within the team on a regular basis and along democratic lines.

We therefore organise on the one hand regular personnel meetings for consultation and discussion when both educational related and technical organisational items feature on the agenda.

On the other hand organising age group meetings means that we can discuss each individual child as well as the functioning of the department.

The managers of the two day care centres hold joint monthly staff or team meetings.

Where necessary individual job reviews are organised with members of personnel.

Training is also an important resource here and is provided annually for all members of personnel.

We regularly involve parents with flexible working hours to take over the work of the carers for a couple of hours in the middle of the day at the children's nap time. This allows us to organise meetings with the personnel.

c. The principles regarding collaboration with parents and children

When you are responsible for the care and upbringing of children a good relationship with the parents is very important. For a time the day care centre becomes a very important partner in your child's upbringing. Together we bring up your child, together we are responsible. There has to be reciprocal trust. In the first place we hope to achieve this by creating an **attitude of openness** and **consultation**. Children and parents have to feel that they are being properly welcomed in the same way every day. This attitude gives you the opportunity every day to exchange the necessary information with your child's care assistant.

When you drop off your child in the morning or collect it in the evening we consider it quite normal for you to come into the room where your child is. All little toddlers think it great if you just sit yourself down for a while on the mat or at the table during the first or last activity of the day or at snack time.

You may always phone to ask after your child. In the first few days we think this quite normal, yet later on too if you ever have to drop off your child for instance when it is a little unsettled for any reason.

Our communication with you takes a variety of routes. Messages of general purpose are passed on to you via your child's clothes locker, and the same applies for your monthly invoices.

Special messages are displayed or written on the entrance board. The lift also serves as message distribution point.



Special activities such as a Christmas party, a video afternoon or pancake afternoon are also specially brought to your attention.

More detailed information about educational policy, collaborating with parents and children and collaborating with external parties may be found in the quality manual. This is available for inspection from the managers or can be forwarded to you by e-mail.

III MUTUAL AGREEMENTS

Documents associated with registration

On registration:

Registration form
Registration confirmation document
Rules and regulations

On confirmation from the day care centre for an admission:

Confirmation of admission document from day care centre to parents
Confirmation of admission from parents to day care centre

At the admission meeting

1. information form
2. summary of closure dates
3. information and transfer document to the department
4. diary
5. direct debit instruction
6. care agreement
7. letter from Kind&Gezin for your general practitioner in the case of infectious illnesses.
8. vision document

At the follow-up meeting

1. follow-up meeting document
2. complaint and/or suggestion reporting form

Arrangements concerning the care plan

During the admission visit the care plan (see care agreement) is established for your child while allowing for your own studying, working and/or living situation and your wishes.

If your studying, working and/or living situation changes you must tell one of the managers and the care agreement can possibly be amended accordingly.



In view of the great demand for admissions in day care centres we ask parents who lose their jobs, are unemployed, discontinue their studies or who are on maternity leave, to change the care agreement (e.g. to less days or half days or shorter days). This is always done in consultation with the manager. Also parents who applied for a fulltime place, but who in practice are not making use of it will be spoken to about it.

Thus the care plan is evaluated regularly and adapted as necessary.

If unexpectedly you do not bring your child, for instance in the case of illness, we expect to receive telephone notification before 08:30 in the morning for parents of the day care centre in Jette and before 09:00 in the morning for parents of the day care centre in Elsene.

In order to avoid any misunderstandings we believe it wise that you should know whom you should notify about this absence. Just feel free to ask for the name! State your child's name and the department he/she stays in as well as the reason for his/her absence. The person who takes your call will make sure that your child's care assistant is informed.

The other way round, if you want to bring your child on an unannounced day, then it is best to arrange this the previous day before 15:30 with one of the managers. Exceptionally this may also be negotiated the same morning.

In the event of repeated departures from the agreed care plan, unannounced absences or late absences, a surcharge by way of sanction will be required (see IV. financial terms).

Half and one third days

A half day lasts a maximum of 5 hours depending on the number of meals.

A one third day lasts 3 hours maximum.

Naturally parents can also turn a full day into a part-time day provided that they inform the care assistant no later than on the day itself.

The other way round, turning a part-time day in the admission plan into a full day needs to be requested formally from a day care centre manager. This may also be done on the day itself.

During holiday periods we do a survey in order to find the best deployment of personnel for the number of children attending. (see also IV. Financial terms)

If an absence without notification lasts longer than one week you will be contacted for consultation.

If your child is absent for over one month for some reason other than long leave the manager must be notified. The department head must be consulted to see whether the care place can remain reserved and if not whether a fresh application will be required.



Arrangements concerning drop-off and pick-up times

During the admission visit (see care agreement) you will be informed about the times when in principle you drop off and pick up your child.

In principle babies may be dropped off and picked up at any time. A verbal arrangement with the care assistant in charge can prove useful here depending on your child's feeding and sleeping routine and your own timetable too.

Preferably children in the toddler group (older than 14 months) should be dropped off before 10:00 in the morning or after 14:30 in the afternoon. You can discuss any exceptions connected with your working situation with one of the day care centre managers. As far as is practical we would ask you to avoid the time of the (for the most part collective) children's nap.

All children must be picked up at 18:15. In order that you can stay fairly informed about your child and have the time to get your child dressed it is advisable to arrive no later than 18:05.

If you arrive late the child will remain under the supervision of the manager or care assistant present.

If parents arrive "too late" repeatedly it will be considered whether the day care centre is still able to meet your needs in terms of caring times. If necessary the provision of care may be discontinued.

The care agreement indicates those persons to whom the child may be entrusted at pick-up time. For the sake of certainty we ask parents to warn the care assistant that same day if friends, babysitters or relations are going to pick up the child in the evening.

In the case of divorce the day care centre will adopt a neutral position. We will comply with provisional agreements with both parents or respect any court rulings. These agreements will be set out in the care agreement.

If your child is to be picked up by a person who is a stranger to us, we must be notified.

This may be done in the morning through the care assistant or by telephone during the day.

In case of doubt we will ask for the identity card of the person concerned and will contact the parents.

Finally we would ask you to keep us advised in good time of any changes in address, telephone or job, so that we are always able to reach you when necessary.

Arrangements concerning feeding



For both of the day care centres healthy, varied and freshly prepared food is of the first importance.

hot meals in Jette:

The hot meals (baby meals and toddler meals) are prepared in the University Hospital kitchen. They are ordered daily and prepared fresh according to the number of children. Special purpose receptacles are used to bring them in and distribute them in the day care centre.

The meals made up by the hospital meet the needs of the young children. Naturally it is also possible to respond to individual needs. Composing the menus is supervised by one of the hospital's dieticians. Each week a menu is displayed in your child's department.

hot meals in Elsene:

A cook working with the day care centre freshly prepares the children's food in the day care centre's own modernised kitchen.

For this we have a certificate from the food inspectorate allowing us to prepare hot and cold meals and to distribute them in accordance with the required standards.

You will see the menu displayed in the building's entrance. It is carefully composed in consultation with one of the managers according to the children's ages.

Arrangements applicable to both day care centres

Parents themselves must provide milk powder for bottle feeding.

If desired expressed breast milk may be brought in.

Subject to clear arrangements, if mum works nearby and has flexible working hours, she may prefer to come in to breastfeed.

Where necessary and in consultation with one of the managers special diet food (e.g. in the case of bowel movement problems) can be prepared or provided.

A request for 'special diet food' applies for at least three days and must be notified before 08:30 in the morning.

Wherever possible specific wishes and habits will be taken into account.

Such individual departures will be clarified in the care agreement during the admission visit.

Breakfast for children arriving in the day care centre in Jette before 08:00 in the morning may be requested.

Fruit purée and toddlers' snacks at tea-time are prepared in the two day care centres.

Arrangements concerning clothing



The children wear their own personal clothing. Parents are asked to bring along appropriate spare clothes. The spare clothes are kept in the department's entrance cupboard or the cupboard by the bathroom.

The day care centre provides bibs.

In order to keep 'lost' clothes to a minimum it is advisable to mark clothes with the child's name.

Arrangements concerning nursing

General nursing products like Mustela, nappy rash ointment, physiological serum for children with the beginnings of a runny nose (not for continuous use with a cold), bruise ointments, antiseptics, sticking plasters, anti-fever agents, insect bite ointment and sun cream are always available in the day care centre.

It is possible for the child's own nursing products to be used. This is discussed during the admission visit and indicated in the care agreement.

The day care centre provides nappies. In exceptional cases the child's own nappies may be brought along in the case of serious nappy rash and with a medical certificate from a doctor or paediatrician.

Giving daily baths is no longer a day care centre tradition. Of course if a child has a fever it will be given a cooling bath and if it vomits or has diarrhoea it will be cared for hygienically.

Arrangements concerning children's vaccinations

Every parent must declare in the care agreement whether the child has been or will be vaccinated against poliomyelitis.

This is a statutory requirement in Belgium.

We also strongly advise parents to have their child vaccinated in accordance with the Kind&Gezin vaccination scheme. The risk, in the case of inadequate immunity, of diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, meningitis from Haemophilus influenza B, meningitis or septicaemia from meningitis C, measles, mumps, rubella and hepatitis B, consists of serious complications.

After all a non-vaccinated child can be a carrier of one of these diseases and so possibly infect other, not yet vaccinated young infants or (pregnant) adults who are not immune.

What to do when your child is ill

A day care centre is no place for a sick child. Consequently it is also necessary to arrange potential preventive solutions in case you find that your child is ill in the morning or when urgent alternative care is necessary.

Being slightly indisposed is acceptable.



When is a child sick?

Below is a list from Kind&Gezin of some signs of illness, which mean that the child must be excluded from the day care centre:

- Diarrhoea: runny or watery bowel motion accompanied by fever or bloodstained stools (loose bowel motion is not a reason for refusal)
- Vomiting: accompanied by being generally ill; risk of dehydration
- Very heavy coughing (runny nose and coughing not accompanied by feeling generally ill are not a reason for refusal)
- Fever (>38.5°) accompanied by sore throat, vomiting, diarrhoea, earache, irritability, confusion or red rash.
- Any child that due to illness requires so much attention that the health and/or safety of the other children can no longer be guaranteed (e.g. over-irritability, incessant crying)
- Any child that is unable to participate in the normal activities of the child care centre due to its state of illness.

If in doubt it is best to contact the manager to discuss this.

If a child becomes ill during the course of the day in the day care centre and/or starts a fever one of the managers will contact the parents to decide whether the child can stay or whether it would be better that the parents collect the child. We look at this in the interest of the child, yet also in the interest of the other children being cared for and the possible extra workload that caring for the child that has become ill entails.

In very exceptional circumstances if the child seems to be in a critical condition the manager (in consultation with the department head) and if the parents cannot be reached will call a doctor or the emergency service.

In the case of certain infectious illness we ask that temporarily the child should not be brought to the day care centre.

These are: chicken pox, rubella, mumps, meningitis, hepatitis, measles, diarrhoea caused by rotavirus, gastroenteritis or a bacterium, lice

The period that your child cannot attend day care is decided in consultation with one of the managers.

If your child is undergoing an infectious illness, it is the parents' responsibility to inform the manager of the day care centre, even if you do not bring your child to the day care centre.

This is by way of preventive protection of other children and employees in our child care facility.

This is why precautions may be arranged within the day care centre to minimise infection. Parents of the unit involved will be informed by among others a letter addressed to their general practitioner (Kind&Gezin model form)



Parents must also advise the day care centre if the child has any medical problems that require particular attentiveness on the part of the care assistant or manager.

Arrangements concerning administration of medication

In principle no medication is administered in the day care centre. We urge parents to ask their doctor to prescribe medication that they themselves can administer in the mornings and evenings. We would like to be informed about this.

Exceptionally, if your child has to take a medicine while staying in the day care centre, then this is possible, provided that a medical certificate is presented stating the administration dosage and times as well as the duration of the treatment. Without this certificate we ask parents to complete a pre-printed medication slip (medication name/doctor's name/pharmacist/child's name/dosage and manner of administration and the duration of treatment/ manner of storing) at the day care centre and to sign it so that the responsibility of administration is clearly established.

At the moment this procedure is not yet fully organised and will be clarified in greater detail in a communication.

Arrangements in connection with medical consultation

At present the day care centre does not provide any preventive medical consultation. In the day care centre in Jette you may attend the weekly sessions of the Kind&Gezin Consultation Bureau.

Contact the day care centre manager to arrange this. This is also discussed during the admission visit.

Accidents

Should something happen to your child while in the day care centre in the first instance we will contact you as parent. If necessary we will call the emergency services or if we are in the position to do so, we will take your child to the Jette University Hospital, unless during your admission visit you have expressly selected another hospital. This is then noted on the care agreement.

IV FINANCIAL TERMS

Calculating parental contributions

When we talk about parents' financial contribution we mean the cost per day for the care provided.



This parental contribution is calculated under application of the Ministerial Decree of 28 March 2002 in compliance with the communications dated 26.04.2002 and 29.11.2002 by Kind&Gezin concerning the conditions for calculating the financial contribution by parents as payment for the care of children in day care centres.

If desired this Ministerial Decree can be sent to you on simple request.

Parents themselves can calculate their parental contributions on the www.kinderopvang.be website or they can call the child care line 078.150.100

In order to improve parents' insight into the parental contribution scheme Kind&Gezin asks us to mention the following principles:

1. The tax form is always the basis for calculation. If there is no tax form, then special rules apply.
If current family income is 20% lower, then more recent and relevant income particulars may be used for setting the contribution.
2. The way in which the contribution is calculated depends on the size of the family income. There are three categories of income size. If the family income falls in the lowest or middle category, the parental contribution is calculated by multiplying the income by a fixed coefficient; for the highest income category a fixed scale is used.
3. Two kinds of deduction are possible:
on the one hand based on the number of children;
on the other hand for very low incomes below a certain threshold.
4. The part of the parental contribution actually payable per care day depends on the duration of stay per day:
40% for care provision of less than 3 hours
60% for care provision of 3 hours to less than 5 hours
100% for care provision of over 5 hours

The necessary evidence, which makes it possible for us to determine the correct level of income, must be submitted **before the care provision** of your child starts.

As long as the forms have not been brought in, the provision of care cannot start except at the maximum rate.

Submitting the evidence too late may result in a parental contribution already paid being recalculated, unless you are able to prove force majeure. A relevant reduction in parental contribution can only be applied from the day on which the evidence is submitted.

The individual amount will be indicated in the care agreement.

Determining parental contributions applies for the whole year except when it can be demonstrated that the family income has fallen by at least 20%.

The parental contribution covers the costs of staying.



As mentioned in the Ministerial Decree of 28.03.2002 an “ordinary” surcharge of € 1/day is charged for the use and processing of nappies, nursing products, etc. This is an averaged lump sum and continues to be charged throughout your child’s entire duration of stay in the day care centre.

Garantee payment

The nursery expects a written confirmation of the parents if they agree to the recording date.

At that time an advanced payment is asked of 100 Eur (50 Eur with low incomes).

This amount is over and over again an advance for the next monthly invoice.

This amount will be refunded when your child has left the day care center.

This amount is listed in the following cases :

- the withdrawal is delayed by the parents with more than one month (20 working days).
- the recording does not continue after you had already pledged.
- the child within the period of 2 month leaves the nursery.
- the cancellation terms have not been followed
- by open invoices.

Manner of invoicing and payment

Based on the department’s attendance lists the invoice is calculated on a monthly basis and put in an envelope in your child’s personal locker (around the 15th day of the following month).

Payment should be made preferably through a direct debit instruction with your bank. The procedure for this will be explained during the admission visit.

If payment through your direct debit instruction is refused, then we will ask you to settle the invoice by means of a bank transfer.

The VUB accounts department checks payments.

If this second method of payment does not go through, then you will be given 2 weeks opportunity to pay the amount due in cash to the day care centre manager.

If this does not happen, then the provision of care will be temporarily refused for your child until the outstanding invoices are settled and the VUB legal department will automatically deal with the dossier.

Direct debit means that invoice payments are collected a month and a half after the invoice date. We would like to point out to parents that when the provision of care in the day care centre ends, from that point on there will be another two invoices to follow.



So the direct debit instruction should remain active for another two months after your child leaves the day care centre. Alternatively you may come in to pay off the last 2 months in cash. This will be discussed with the last care agreement.

Tax certificate

In May each year you will receive a tax certificate of the parental contributions paid to add to your tax return. You need to collect this certificate in person from the manager. You will sign a copy of the certificate for the day care centre to keep.

Updating parental contributions

Parental contributions are updated on 1 January each year. That is to say that a more recent tax form will be taken into account and wage indexation will be applied.

If not submitted in time, then no later than 15 January the maximum contribution will be charged. Any reduction in parental contribution can only be applied from the day that the evidence is submitted.

The principles for granting a hardship rate or free child care

The day care centre may allow a reduction in the form of a hardship rate for families contending with an exceptional financial situation. In certain cases free provision of care may even be allowed. This is done in consultation with the manager and the department head. Any hardship rates granted are evaluated annually.

Parents wishing to request a hardship rate should first talk with the manager, then apply in writing to the department head.

The manager will prepare an administrative dossier with the relevant information and a reasoned decision. In consultation with the department head the dossier will receive a response within one month.

The individual amount of the hardship rate or free care will be quoted in the care agreement.

Summary of documents to be submitted for an approved application

- Latest tax form
- If no tax form is available, documents providing recent and relevant income details
- If need be a document showing that the family income has fallen by 20% compared to the income that was taken as basis.



- For the special categories cited in the Ministerial Decree, particularly officials of the European Community, Embassy Personnel, persons associated with scientific institutions and Foreign Students, documents that provide recent relevant details about their pay.

How parents give notice to terminate

On moving on to nursery school

When your child approaches school age we will send you a letter asking you about your intentions regarding the time when your child would be leaving the day care centre as well as the choice of school.

We are always available to discuss any questions or thoughts with you.

For the sake of good organisation the day care centre would like to be advised about the termination of care at least 2 months prior to departure.

In other circumstances such as moving house, a period of notice to quit is set of at least 1 month.

In both cases, if these periods are exceeded, the advance on the last invoice (€ 50) will be withheld as compensation.

These periods of notice may be departed from where reasons are justified (e.g. sudden unemployment) without any compensation being withheld.

How the day care centre gives notice to terminate

- The provision of care for the child will be temporarily refused until outstanding invoices are settled.
- If parents arrive “too late” repeatedly it will be considered whether the day care centre is still able to meet your needs in terms of caring times. If necessary provision of the care may be discontinued.

Reservation deposit

The day care centre expects a written confirmation from parents if they agree to the admission date.

At that point they will be asked to remit a reservation deposit of 50 euros to the day care centre. This sum serves in each case as an advance for your next invoice. This means that the 50 euros will be transferred back to you once your child leaves the day care centre. This sum is withheld if:

- parents postpone the admission by over one month (20 working days).
- the admission does not go through as you promised.
- the child leaves the day care centre within the period of 2 months.
- the notice to terminate procedures (see above) were not observed.
- if any invoices are outstanding.

Repeated departures from the agreed care plan

If you repeatedly depart from the agreed care plan you will be invited to discuss this with the manager. If you fail to announce your child’s absence or do so too late (after 08:30), a surcharge by way of sanction will be charged of 25% of the



daily price with a minimum of 1.28 euros (indexed annually). See care agreement.

The purpose of the survey during holiday periods is to help find the best deployment of personnel for the number of children attending. A difference of 2 or 3 days more or less can be discussed. Any radical or repeated changes just prior to or during the holiday period are subject to the same surcharge.

Filming in the day care centre

Now and again video recordings are made or photos taken in the day care centre:

- in the context of a video afternoon for parents. Filming children in the department is one of the best ways of providing parents with a better insight into their child's life in the day care centre. It gives an idea of the broad range of activities that the child encounters here. Afterwards parents have the chance to obtain a copy of the video, a pleasant memento of the day care centre time.
- in order in certain cases to observe the child better and record the behaviour on video so that together with a manager the child care assistant can better understand and help the child.
- at the request of third parties, for example a television broadcaster, to record fragments about child care.

Parents who prefer not to give their consent to this, may make a note about it with their signature of the care agreement.



V QUALITY POLICY

MISSION

VUB day care centres organise day care for children before they go to pre-school and in the transition period between child care and pre-school.

Setting out from what is important in terms of developmentally psychological and pedagogical visions for the care and upbringing of these young children as a target group, creating an optimum quality environment is an essential pillar of our mission.

Openness towards and collaboration with parents forms a second pillar of our mission.

By harmonising and responding to the needs and requirements of children and their parents we believe we find a healthy interplay between on the one hand respect for the individual (child, parent) and the interest of the overall organisation of the day care centre on the other.

We believe in child care positioned as a valuable complement to the upbringing at home.

A professionally composed and expert team of personnel forms the third pillar in terms of fulfilling the intended objectives.

We feel that creating a democratic culture of cooperation where communication, consultation and agreements in the area of responsibilities are central is a precondition for efficient and smooth functioning.

Having satisfied employees already guarantees an important share in the satisfaction of children and parents.

Last but not least we want to stress that just as in the spirit of Free Research it is appropriate that in our service provision nobody suffers discrimination on the grounds of culture, social origin, nationality, sex, belief or life principles. The rights safeguarded by the Convention on the Rights of the Child are respected.

VISION

VISION relating to the PEDAGOGICAL FUNCTIONING in respect of the CHILDREN

The day care centres of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) welcome everyone. We guide a young child through the different stages of development towards being a child ready for school.

This guidance carries with it a number of important aspects.

Within our pedagogical functioning we endeavour to ensure that what we provide corresponds with the needs of every individual. By working as much as possible with fulltime child care assistants and their special care children, we aim to build up quality relationships. After all a bonding relationship can only be formed when you offer a child safety, warmth, security and trust.

Respecting each child's own routine, particularly their individual characters and habits, with special attention to social and cultural diversity, strengthens our policy of individualisation.

Yet at the same time a certain structure and foundation is offered. By means of simple rules and arrangements in the day-to-day getting together the children learn to function in time and space.

Taking time for each child individually and actively listening are approaches used as a means for good communication and understanding. In this way children with specific needs in their development may also count on receiving appropriate care and attention while retaining respect for their possibilities.

An essential value in our pedagogical functioning lies in the availability of and experiencing play, toys and activities. The interplay between what the child finds pleasing and/or absorbing and what the manager intends, and thanks to the cumulative experience, creativity and expertise of the personnel, results in encouragement to develop, self-reliance and independence of the children entrusted to us.

The child's own input as well as stimulating linguistic development and imagination come up just as much during specific activities as at eating times and during nappy changes.

VUB day care centres are accommodated in an infrastructure specifically designed for child care. This infrastructure complies with prevailing rules and regulations in respect of the necessary provision of space and safety.

The children spend their time in living areas that are equipped to be child-friendly with the main accent being on hominess, psychological and physical safety and freedom of movement.

Space is an important behaviour-deciding factor and our day care centres regularly receive appropriate evaluation in terms of layout, colours, presence of aspects of cultural diversity, order and tidiness.

During the care of every child in VUB day care centres an important issue is to ensure the overall welfare of each child. Apart from having an eye for the supply of optimum developmental opportunities, monitoring physical health is at least as essential.

The personnel organisation is directed at guaranteeing permanent supervision of the children.

By means of observing and keeping records every care assistant is alert to different health parameters. In consultation with a manager and/or parents action is taken where necessary.

The care assistant takes note of each child's developmental characteristics and individuality and these are discussed at the age group meetings. This allows insight into not only the pace of development but also the way each child is "different". Any suspicion of problematic behaviour and/or development will get a hearing here.

Within our team we believe it important to build up and maintain good relations and collaboration with both parents and employees, so that this can lead to the kind of quality caring in which pedagogical continuity can be ensured for the child.

In short, VUB day care centres vouch for a valuable complement to the home upbringing.

VISION relating to the FUNCTIONING in respect of and COLLABORATING with the PARENTS

A day care centre has as its target group and principal activity the pre-school care of young children. The wishes and needs of these children cannot be seen separately from the wishes and needs of their parents.

A good relationship and understanding with parents is therefore essential.

For a time the day care centre becomes a very important partner in a child's upbringing. Together we bring up a child, together we are responsible.

It must be possible to build up a relationship of trust.

In our day care centres we try to achieve this with an attitude of openness and consultation. We pay attention to this right from the initial contacts when information is being asked for and/or when an application is being made to admit the existing or future child.

Every parent is listened to, informed, and if desired and if possible registered for admission.

On the one hand having a clear registration and admission procedure and on the other maintaining a correct, friendly and helpful contact (either in person, by telephone or e-mail) immediately sets the tone for a professional collaboration with the parents.

Once we have the admission procedure behind us we then face a fresh challenge, namely that of guiding child and parent or parents towards their start in the day care centre.

We are aware that for every parent, individually and afresh, it is not so easy, not so obvious, just to entrust your child to an initially unknown person.

Countless emotions and concerns play their tricks here.

So precisely in order to respond to this, aside from a comprehensive admission visit, we offer parents ample opportunities to "settle in" together with their child in the department where and with the care assistant with whom your little ones will be spending their time.

A personal bond grows between child care assistant and parents. She becomes the principal contact on whom parents can count. Here mutual communication and information exchange guarantees continuity in the child's upbringing.

The child carer makes time for every parent and makes herself free for a discussion. She is reliable, tactful, reassuring where necessary and expert.

Any time they want parents are welcome in the child's department, subject to the arrangement of not disturbing during collective nap times.

Naturally if parents have any questions, uncertainties, concerns or wishes they are also free to approach a manager.

We listen to every question and/or suggestion and look for the best solution within the day care centre's structure and possibilities.

Our doors are open. Every member of personnel guarantees discretion in dealing with information.

It is important that when dropping off and picking up their child, parents should be able to spare some time to talk about their child and to exchange thoughts.

Upbringing at home and in the day care centre do not need to run exactly the same; what is important that we are able to talk about it and in that way obtain more insight into your child's behaviour.

We have respect for different cultures, different ideas on upbringing and by making good arrangements we try to match our functioning to specific wishes.

From time to time parent meetings are organised within the department or sometimes in the day care centre as a whole. A Christmas party, a video afternoon are moments that enable relations to strengthen between parents and personnel and between parents and other parents.

At the same time we sometimes call on parents to spend for example just an hour in a children's department (usually in the afternoon when most children are sleeping) in order to allow the team to have meetings.

Parents of very young children are usually very busy and so do not have oceans of spare time. Yet we still believe that collaborating with parents and involving parents in the functioning of the day care centre can be further advanced in terms of both form and content.

Giving shape to this consideration certainly represents an important aspect of our continued working on quality.

Finally, with a two-yearly satisfaction measurement, we endeavour to poll all parents at least once about the day care centre's functioning. This helps accentuate things for appropriate adjustment towards the future.

VISION relating to COLLABORATION with EXTERNAL PERSONS and ORGANISATIONS

In today's social process childcare is an indispensable link in realising various objectives.

This fact is further confirmed in the social added value of childcare when one realises the functions for which childcare now stands.

These functions were recently pointed out in the doctorate by Mr. Michel Vandebroek, namely:

The economic or employment function, which means that child care makes it possible for work and family to be reconciled.

The pedagogical or upbringing supporting function, which means that providing care does not purely comprise caring for children, but quite the reverse that it offers these children play and development opportunities and forms a complement, an enrichment to the upbringing at home. Childcare is becoming as such a third upbringing environment beyond family and school.

The social function, which means that providing care contributes to creating a fairer society. Among other things it means that care assistants, children and parents learn to get on with one another in a tolerant and democratic way.

Childcare forms part of a broad social process and so also means receptiveness towards and cooperation with the outside world.

For VUB day care centres this broader framework is formed by the

- VUB's university context
- Brussels context in which we are located
- Flemish context in which we are situated as welfare institution.

VUB's university context

VUB day care centres form part of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. As the organising authority the university has therefore always been an important framework for the overall functioning.

Both the social and pedagogical objectives of VUB day care centres should be seen in the history of the development of the VUB at the end of the sixties and the University Hospital in the seventies. In particular this functioning is positioned within among others the service provision and policy plan of the vice-chancellorship STUDENT POLICY.

Not only does this positioning within the university have its impact on the management and policy conducted (policy and management options are drawn up and assessed against the objectives of these sectors), but also on placement policy (priority is given to working members of personnel yet also to persons who are studying, so to those who for socio-pedagogical reasons and due to a lesser financial capacity, are unable to take charge of their child on their own.)

The Brussels context in which we are located

Both of the VUB day care centres are located on Brussels metropolitan territory:

in 1050 Brussels-Elsene with a capacity of 63 children

in 1090 Brussels-Jette with a capacity of 70 children

As such in Brussels we represent the largest Dutch-speaking child day care institution for children aged between 0 and 3 years.

We further build on our presence within this Brussels context by participating in committees and workgroups organised by the VGC, the Flemish Community Commission. In the Brussels metropolitan district the VGC is in charge of WELFARE matters and so also, besides the competent Flanders Authorities, sets out a supplementary policy plan.

By actively participating in the advisory workgroup Pre-school Affairs we are directly involved in this.

By actively participating in interview groups for managers of day care centres we are on the one hand ourselves directed and informed, yet on the other we are also able to pass on our own visions.

Belonging to the Municipalities of Elsene and Jette we take an active part in the communally organised meetings concerning children, childcare and education. Not only does participating in these meetings bring us into contact with other players in the field in relation to children in the surrounding community (school boards, youth and sports associations, local discussion on child care outside school), it also gives us information about planned policies and we are able where possible to contribute by adding information and/or suggestions.

Within the framework of “working towards diversity” we are supported by the Brussels Dutch-speaking Committee for Employment and Education and we have taken up a management role in the non-profit making ELMER project, an employment and care project with the following mission: Elmer aims to improve the welfare, social opportunities and participation of families and children by organising neighbourhood services providing Dutch-speaking, low-threshold, quality child care in Brussels. The functioning connected with education and employment of employees from among the disadvantaged forms an integral part here.

Respect for diversity and individuality and belief in the positive chances for growth of any individual are important values here.

As a childcare project located in Jette on the campus of the University Hospital and originating there from the childcare needs of the hospital’s personnel, we naturally enjoy a close association with the hospital. For different facilities we are able to tap the know-how available there (nutrition, medical, technical, etc.), while the service provision within the potentials of our resources is matched to the needs of the hospital in evolution.

Brussels context in which we are located

As a Dutch-speaking childcare institution we come under the instructions of Kind&Gezin, which we adhere to closely.

Consultation with similar care initiatives concerning political and social evolutions and the associated decrees and the like ensuing from this, takes place through our membership of the coordinating employers’ platform within the youth and child care sectors, namely PPJ, Pluralistic Platform Youth Care.

VALUES

The values that characterise the vision and functioning of VUB day care centres

At macro level

These are the values defined in the updated social context of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel as a whole.

FREE-THINKING
DIVERSITY
TOLERANCE
DEMOCRACY

At micro level

As regards FUNCTIONING the VALUES are:

QUALITY
PARTICIPATION
RESPONSIBILITY

As regards SERVICE PROVISION the VALUES are:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
MUTUAL RESPECT
DIALOGUE

As regards what is PROCESS-RELATED the VALUES are:

OPENNESS
INVOLVEMENT
FLEXIBILITY
CREATIVITY
EXPLORATION

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF VUB DAY CARE CENTRES

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