

**Location specific educational work plan for**

***Big Ben Kids Centre***

**After School Club**



*Version: January 2019*

by Zo Kinderopvang

## Foreword

This is the location specific educational work plan for Big Ben Kids.

*Big Ben Kids* educational plan is described in the out-of-school care general educational policy plan. This policy plan is outlined in the introduction of this location specific educational work plan.

This plan describes location specific issues such as the appearance of the location, details about the programmes, which issues we specify in line with the central educational policy and the location specific rules. It also gives you an impression of the activities that are organised and the themes which are handled.

The plan sets out the course for the rest of the year. It is compiled by the General Manager in cooperation with the location's educational staff members who work with the children every day and who are thus in the best position to notice details. These details are necessary to create an individualised, safe and secure environment for the children – a solid foundation for child development.

We hope you enjoy reading Big Ben Kids *on the Zoutmansstraat 23* location specific educational work plan.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our General Manager!

General Manager: Erna Borbas  
*Big Ben Kids Centre*

## Chapter 1 Big Ben Kids After School Club educational plan

### Introduction

The educational policy plan and the educational work plan are living documents. We evaluate the educational policy every two years and, if there are any changes, adapt the work plan accordingly.

Educational staff members, supported by the General Manager and the education department, are continuously working on further developing the methodology and their own competence. At *Big Ben Kids*, development never stops.

At *Big Ben Kids* after school care, personal contact between the employees and every child and his/her parents<sup>i</sup> is paramount. Raising children and stimulating their development happens in dedicated relationships with trusted adults.

### Language

At Big Ben Kids, our international day care and after-school care location, we use the English language in all our communication. Most of our parents and children have international backgrounds or are resident in the Netherlands for a short period of time. The English language is the most commonly shared language amongst our expatriate families.

After School care is education in one's free time. Schooling for children is compulsory in the Netherlands and some of these children come to the after school care after school. After school care is the transition between school and home. We actively seek collaboration and connections with the children's schools and strive to create consistency for the children between their various educational facilities. After school care has no cognitive learning goals unless these are specifically defined for particular children. We follow the children in their development, but we do not set exams.

### Objectives

Big Ben Kids strive to help raise children to be happy, democratic citizens with open minds and who are interested, have a sense of community and take responsibility for themselves and for their surroundings, and who adopt a healthy lifestyle<sup>ii</sup>. We support children in recognising and developing their talents, and we encourage them to use these for society. Our philosophy incorporates the statutory objectives of offering emotional security, developing personal and social adeptness and passing on norms and values. <sup>iii</sup>

### Vision on development

Primary school children develop best in a safe environment where they have the space and are challenged to do things themselves, to experiment and to be involved in the decision-making process. In the context of the out-of-school care, this is done in a safe group setting where regular and trusted employees take the children seriously and listen to them, offer them plenty of activities and create plenty of room for taking on challenges, initiative, having adventures and relaxing. <sup>iv</sup>

### An open and interested attitude

Employees show genuine interest in the children. We invite the children to express their own opinions and to share them with each other and with the educational staff members. We take their opinions seriously and we believe that all questions are valid. We are role models for the children. We encourage them to listen to each other and to respect each other's questions and opinions. Together we learn to make choices, argue a case and to underpin arguments. We recognise that every child is unique, and we recognise his/her uniqueness, individual style, speed and character. We note the differences between girls and boys without stereotyping.

Employees look through the eyes of the children to what interests them, and they join the children on their journeys of exploration.

### Democracy, community spirit and responsibility

The group is a miniature practice arena of democracy and a small community. We discuss and organise things with the children as much as we can and make sure that everyone feels listened to and seen. The after school care centre is really *their* after school care centre.

We work on respecting and being interested in each other in the group. We discuss things in small and large groups. We talk about differences in norms and values and invite children to think about these issues with us. We talk about the 'why' behind politeness and we let the children experience the advantages of collaboration.

We work on shared responsibility in the group. Children share the responsibility of looking after the space and we share the tasks in the group such as tidying up and getting meals ready. We arrange the room so that the children themselves can go their own way, can choose activities and can take the materials they need for their activities. They also tidy up the materials so that another child can find them again.

If we want children to learn to take responsibility, it is important that we trust them and they learn that they may make mistakes. Children at the after school care also learn through trial and error. Our work culture is to provide constructive feedback and compliments.

We make agreements and rules together. In doing so we involve all the children, even the quieter children. We help the children learn to deal with conflict and to work towards solutions themselves. We watch out for bullying and try to prevent it. We address children on their behaviour and teach them to do this to each other too. By doing this, they become resilient. In cases of bullying, we support the children to empathise with the child that is bullied. We find out all we can about the bully and then discuss the consequences of bullying. If necessary, there are various methodologies that we can use, such as an anti-bullying programme and different types of games.

The world is larger than one's own location. That's why we bring the children outside, literally and figuratively. We introduce subjects into the group that are based on reality.

We take the children around the neighbourhood and investigate what we can do for society. For example, we see if we can do anything for senior citizens in homes for the elderly, charitable activities and so on. Caring for their surroundings also encourages the children to develop an understanding of sustainability.

### Transitioning

Getting used to a new group and new surroundings makes a deep impression on children. We are very aware of this. When new children come to our centre, both children and parents have to get used to it. While the official 'transition' only happens on the first day specified in the contract, we want to do everything we can to let the first contact with the other children and staff members run smoothly, and we need the time ourselves to get used to the family's habits. We also use this time to exchange information. Most children grow and move from our playgroup (pre-school) to the after school care and have the opportunity to come and play in advance and to make the transition smoothly. Our educational staff members phone the parents at least three weeks prior to the starting date to make an appointment. In our everyday reality, Big Ben Kids does not really need this appointment. Parents are requested to inform us if they wish to use the after school care as the transition from Big Ben Kids day care is not taken for granted.

Six weeks after a transition period we have a conversation with the parents to check how the transition went. We would like to know how the children respond to the new situation and we would like to know what parents think of our services.

### Making it easy for children to get used to a new situation

Our educational staff members phone the parents at least three weeks prior to the starting date to make an appointment.

An in-take meeting is arranged two weeks before the start date of care and the children can come to the centre at least twice to get used to it. The appointment is confirmed in writing by the General Manager. New parents are informed of the following points verbally during the meeting.

- The procedures to allow children to get used to the centre.
- The time that the parent and child are expected.
- The time that you can collect your child after he/she has been at the group for a couple of hours.
- During the transition period in a new group, the children should not curtail their time at the centre. The educational staff members are responsible for letting the child play in the familiar group and in the new group.

### Getting used to the new group

Prior to moving to the next group, the educational staff member lets the parents know when and to which group their child can go and the transition process. The staff member introduces them to the new group's educational staff members.

The child is brought by an educational staff member from the old group to the new group on the first day of the transition period. The educational staff member remains with the

child in the new group for a while. The child then stays in the new group and the educational staff member returns to the other group after clearly telling the child that he/she will be collected later. The same educational staff member that brings the child to the new group collects him/her again. During the child's first few days in the new group, the educational staff members pay extra attention to him/her.

Depending on how the first day of the transition period went, a plan is made for the rest of the transition period with the old and new staff members. This period depends on the child and his/her responses to the new staff members, group composition and surroundings.

### Transitioning to the new group

*(from the youngest after school care to the oldest after school care)*

Prior to the transition to the next group, the educational staff member explains to the parents when and to which group the child will go and what the transition procedure will be like. The staff member introduces the parents to the educational staff members of the new group. An educational staff member of the new group gives parents explains a typical day in the new group and the rules. The child might get a new mentor appointed of which the parents are immediately informed. Parents can always inform us of anything that we need to take into account when caring for their child. We specifically ask about any issues during the first meeting we have with them.

### Developing personal and social competences

Emotional safety and (self-)confidence enables children to explore. We support children to develop themselves in a playful way, by playing by themselves, investigating and experiencing. Children discover who they are, discover their own personality, when they feel heard, when they are allowed to do what they can do by themselves.

The care practitioners show patience in this and take turns in interacting.

We stimulate independence and create many possibilities for children to choose from.

The enormous, variety offer of activities plays a huge part in this.

For instance, we teach the children to eat with a fork, drink out of a cup, make their own sandwich and dress and undress themselves. Also, in accordance with their age, children can choose what they would like on their sandwich: chicken, cheese, etc. This is how we stimulate them to make their own choices.

When children play committed, they develop themselves. Therefore, we organise an offer and situations in the group through which children can achieve committed play. We do this by developing meaningful themed- activities. The offer concerns all areas of development in the age of 0-4 years old: moving and sensory experiencing, playing and living together, language and communication, nature and physical environment, organizing, measuring and calculating, sounds and music, dance and movement and expression.

We observe each child individually, aimed at well-being, commitment and development.

We help children to reflect their own activities and behaviour.

We stimulate interaction.

We reward children by giving positive feedback (experiencing and naming acknowledging their success), or by giving compliments for the intention instead of the result (not: 'beautiful' but instead: 'you worked real hard!').

Through regular documentation, in parent meetings and a child-monitoring system (MY PROFILE), care practitioners and parents show each other this development and what the children experience at home and in the group. Parents are gladly committed to the daily activities in the group. Our closed Facebook account Big Ben Kids Community contributes to this also enormously. We have regular conversations with parents about the development of their child and how we support this in the group and at home. If we have any concerns about a child, we follow the care protocol.

We show interest in the children, talk with them and observe where their interests lie. We provide materials for all the domains where the children can also work independently. We discuss the interests of the children with each other and together develop themes with activities in the children's zone of proximal development. To do this, the employees make sure that they stay abreast of the development phases of primary school-aged children and the phase in which each individual child is. They are also trained by our organization in the domains mentioned above.

The children themselves make a major contribution to designing a theme. The content is generated with their input and with the awareness that something may have different meanings to different people. For example, spring may mean the birth of nature to an employee while it may mean hay fever to one child or swimming to another. Whenever possible, we involve the children actively in organising activities – what are we going to do, when and with whom, what do we need and so on.

Children are free to choose if they want to be involved in an activity or not. The employees make sure that each child gets his/her turn. There are also activities that the parents sign up in advance. The child then attends the activity during a certain period, these are mostly paid activities. When children choose a theme or activity, we will encourage them to finish it.

### Healthy lifestyle

Naturally the after school care promotes a healthy lifestyle which includes a healthy indoor climate, programme and healthy food. Part of learning to take responsibility for yourself is learning to think about and choosing a healthy lifestyle.

We thus see the active care moments such as eating, drinking or hygiene as opportunities for child development and participation. We talk about nutrition and health and make children aware of what they eat and why good hygiene is important. Cooking together is an activity in which all of these issues surface in an active and realistic scenario. We will make kitchen rules together with the children.

Playing outdoors is important for physical health as well as for other developmental aspects of children such as acquiring a sense of space, social competence, an appreciation of nature and respect for nature and the environment. Research shows that



children love playing outdoors, but sometimes need a little push to go outdoors. That's why we encourage all the children to go outside every day.

### Partnering parents

By definition, working in childcare is working with children *and* their parents. We want to be an extension of what children experience at home. Vice-versa is important for children too so that parents know what happened at the after school care and can build on it at home. Good information exchange during dropping off and collecting children is important in this and is the reason that we also ask parents to keep us updated.

### Child- monitoring system (MY PROFILE):

To determine how children develop themselves, we use the MY PROFILE, individual educational plan. This instrument teaches us to get to know the child; to monitor the development of a child with special attention for the well-being (how is this child doing?) and commitment (how interested is the child?) and to discover the talents of a child, to look for the areas of interest of each child and his/her relationships with others.

The development is followed in four areas of development: motor skills, language, social development, cognitive and mathematic development. At Big Ben Kids we have our own music teacher, who follows the musical expression of the children. In this the emphasis is positive: related to what the child is capable of instead of what it's not capable of.

When through using the MY PROFILE concerns raise about the child's development, we will advise parents to the appropriate organisations. For more information about how we handle concerns in a child's development we advise you to read our child welfare protocol (zorgprotocol).

### Cooperating with primary schools

Big Ben Kids After School Club works with several primary schools in Wassenaar and in The Hague, both Dutch and international primary schools. In our collaboration with schools, we strive for mutual information exchange and continuity for the children. This allows us to take into account what happens at school and for schools to take into account what happens at our after school care. We know the educational vision of the schools and inform them about our educational policy. We know the themes and what happens at the schools.

Some children get homework from their school. The after school care is free time and homework must be done during free time. The homework can be done at the after school care facility. We can make agreements with the children, school and parents accordingly.

### Activity Program

Big Ben Kids offers a large activity program for children and their parents. These activities are internal and externally organized. The external activities are supervised by professionals. Activities can be swimming lessons, ballet, judo lessons. Big Ben Kids has a facilitating role in making sure children are brought back and forth and helping children to get dressed. We also organise workshops at the after school care facility, for example

yoga, djembe, music lessons, building huts, drawing cartoons. A workshop may be a one-off or it could be repeated for several weeks. Children can sign up for these workshops. Once they have actively chosen a workshop and have signed up for it, we encourage them to finish the series. In doing so, we teach them to accept the consequences of the choices they have made. We do this by adopting a positive attitude and showing them the advantages of taking part in the workshop or series of workshops and seeing them through to the end. All our staff members have expertise in one particular educational learning through play area, but we regularly welcome external specialists.

### Holidays

In consultation with the General Manager, the educational staff members prepare a holiday program and share this at least one week in advance with the parents and children. The children regularly go on outings with the educational staff members. We are outdoors frequently and do a lot of sports and outdoor games. We also picnic regularly and eat the food that we have prepared with the children. We visit playgrounds, do treasure hunts, go to the theatre, a museum or to the scouts. We often go to the beach and do trips such as to Madurodam, Cinema, Planet Jump, the petting zoo, Sealife, Drievliet and so on. In short, the children spend their holidays having a real holiday – relaxed, at a trusted place and with friends!

### Educational staff members

Big Ben Kids educational staff members are trained in accordance with the CAO (collective labour agreement), various certified international diplomas (certified by DUO, IDW, Nuffic) and have obtained a children's first aid diploma. They thus have plenty of knowledge and expertise. Everyone is continually working on their self-development at Big Ben Kids.

The educational staff members are an example for the children. They too have plenty of space for taking the initiative and taking responsibility. Just like the children, they too may make mistakes. Big Ben Kids expects its staff to say what they need and want to learn. In consultation with their General Manager they note the points that they want to develop. They also receive support in this from an assistant educationalist.

We try to use video interaction guidance when training staff so that we have examples of the interactive skills of *providing emotional security, respecting autonomy, providing structure and talking with children*<sup>v</sup>.

### The group and Mentors

Each group has its own space/table. This is the group where the children eat as soon as they arrive from school. The different activity spaces may be spread across room. In this case, the children chose which toys they want to play or if they want to play a board game, colour, read etc. The employees offer most of the activities in small groups.

Every child is assigned one employee as his/her mentor. The mentor makes herself known to the child and his parents as being his/her mentor. The name of the mentor is

written down on the form 'Child Data'. The employee closely follows the child in his/her development and is the first point of contact for the parents. On a yearly base a mentor talk is offered to the parents and their child.

At Big Ben Kids we have three groups with their mentor:

Blue: mentor: Anca (max 20 children), age: 4-6 yrs

Pink: mentor: Monica (max 2 children), age 6-8 yrs

Red: mentor: Julie (max 15 children), age 8+ yrs

### Emotional security and continuity

We introduced *three mainstays* for embedding emotional security at Big Ben Kids.

Children's emotional security is determined by these three mainstays:

- the group of children
- the familiar playgroup leader, mentor
- the group space.

Young children are strongly attached to their regular educational staff members who they know well and who are always there. The older children get, the more important their peer group becomes. This is the group of children to which they want to belong. Their world becomes bigger and they become more and more interested in what happens in the outside world. They can then leave their own group space more easily.

If we have to combine groups, we do this by weighing up the three mainstays. The preference is for two – but at least one – of the mainstays to remain in place.

### Volunteers and interns

Volunteers and interns help us to collect children from schools and bring them to activities. It's also possible to ask the volunteers to cook, cleaning tasks and help during lunch break time. If we have interns, it will be no more than 33% of our staff members. We use our policy volunteers and interns.

## Chapter 2 Big Ben Kids after school club educational workplan

### Main groups

#### *Composition of main group/set group*

Big Ben Kids after school club has different spaces in the building. The children are divided into three groups: Red, Pink, Blue. The children are together in one space but they know in which group they belong to by sitting down either on the high chair or the foldable white chairs. There is always one staff member present for up to 10 children at Big Ben Kids. It has a regular team of employees.

#### *Open door policy – Leaving main groups*

We maintain an open door policy at Big Ben Kids, though at meal times or during explanation of activities the group breaks into smaller sub-groups in the different spaces

with familiar teachers/employees. The children are free to enter all the spaces of the after school club. However, when they choose an activity they are to report this to an educational staff member. Children may not leave the after school club facility without permission and must be supervised.

When the children arrive from school, they get something to drink and the warm dinner will be served shortly after that at 16.00. The educational staff member serves the dinner and fruit with the children. They drink water. While eating the staff members talk with the children in a circle about what they did at school and what activities they want to do that afternoon. This is done in their own group. Books are often read aloud or board games played. After the dinner the children help clear up. They then decide what they want to do themselves.

The children who go to their activity straight from school get a snack to bring along like breadsticks or rice crackers to bridge the time until dinner.

We talk about what happened at the after school club and pass on any information that the school may have given us about their children. These are often the times for both parents and staff members to ask questions.

The groups and activities are subject to particular rules. These rules are written down and hung up in the main groups and cover things like no running in the groups, kitchen rules, tidying up before taking something else to play with, hand washing and so on.

### *Educational staff members*

Much care is taken to create stability and continuity in the staffing. Most staff work four or five days so that there are always familiar faces in the group. Our team of educational staff members has been working at the location for two or three or even ten years now. In case of illness or holidays, we ask our permanent staff members to work extra days. When not possible, we recruit a staff member from another location or from our pool of flexible staff members. We always try to keep the familiar faces!

The table below shows the current regular staff.

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Anca/ Julie	Anca/ Julie/Martien/ Monica	Monica/ Anca/ Julie/ Martien	Anca/ Monica/ Martien/ Julie	Monica/ Martien/ Julie

### *3 hours rule (3 uursregeling)*

Dutch law says it is permitted to deviate from the Beroeps Kracht Ratio (Professionals / Child Ratio) –BKR, for 30 minutes maximum.

During holiday weeks, we are open all day (07.30 – 18.30). During lunch break times in the holiday weeks and days when the schools are closed, the staff members of the

location cover for each other. Break time is for half an hour. This schedule shows our deviation times during holidays. At the other times we don't deviate.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Deviation times</b>					
Red, Pink, Blue	08.30 - 09.00 13.00 - 15.00 17.30 - 18.00	08.30 - 09.00 13.00 - 15.00 17.30 - 18.00	08.30 - 09.00 13.00 - 15.00 17.30 - 18.00	08.30 - 09.00 13.00 - 15.00 17.30 - 18.00	08.30 - 09.00 13.00 - 15.00 17.30 - 18.00

### *Collecting children from schools*

The children are collected from school and brought to the after school club. If the school's collection procedure allows, we collect the children from their classrooms. Big Ben Kids plans to collect children from these schools:

De Spiegel (including pre-school Groene Kikkertje)  
HSV location Willemspark  
HSV, location Nassaulaan  
HSV location VNS  
European School  
International School of The Hague  
Van Gogh Lycee

Our educational staff members collect a regular group of children from one or more schools and together they go to our location. Transportation will be by bus, bakfiets or walking. We have clear regulations pertaining to the process of collecting the children. These are repeated every day. Children walk hand in hand and within sight of the educational staff member. The children may not run and they must wait for the group before crossing the road. Our staff wears company clothing. The familiarity of the uniform fosters confidence and recognition among teachers, children and other after school organizations. The children wear helmets in the bakfiets.

At least one educational staff member is present during every activity. Children may only leave the after school club facility under supervision. It goes without saying that the regular trips are done under the supervision of one or more educational staff members. The children wear the Big Ben Kids vests during trips. Our safety rules for outings are supported by a separate document (Outings Policy).

### Physical surroundings

#### *Interior design of the locations*

*Big Ben Kids* is located at Zoutmansstraat 23. The atmosphere is friendly and homely. We strive to be a 'children's room' where the children enjoy playing in trusted surroundings. There are enough activities in the big gym area to make it fun to come 'home'.

The best thing about this space is that the big gym and multifunctionality of the space. There is plenty of space to play freely and to find a place with friends without being disturbed by others. There is a large kitchen where we regularly cook with the children.

The entrance gate has a lock and the parents have to ring the bell then the educational staff member looks outside to see who is standing by the gate. If she/ he recognises the person then they let the person in.

### *Exterior design of the locations*

The children play outside every day. Apart from playing in the school yards and in the nearby parks, our after school care facility loves being out and about mainly on Wednesday and on school holiday days.

### General Information

#### *Incidental purchasing of additional days and switch day policy*

Parents may request switch days at *Big Ben Kids*, providing space allows. As stated in the general terms and conditions, it is also possible to purchase additional days or holiday care on top of a 46 week contract. An incidental additional day (switch day) may be booked in consultation with the educational staff member and will be honoured if the group composition and number of children allows. Additional care days (paid) are possible by sending an email to the General Manager.

#### *Opening times*

Big Ben Kids After School Club is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 1400 to 18:30. On Wednesdays, it is open from 11:30. During school holidays, the centre is open from 08:00 to 18.30.

#### *Different types of care*

*Big Ben Kids* offers:

- daycare (0-4 years);
- after school club for 52 weeks (4-12 years);
- after school club for 46 school weeks (4-12 years);
- holiday care (4-12 years).

We use the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's official holiday dates to plan the holidays (12 weeks a year).

#### *References*

At Big Ben Kids we deliberately choose to have a short and powerful educational plan, to make it easier for our staff to work with. To make sure we have the important things covered we have several protocols to which we refer in the above text. The protocols are:

- Coaching / training staff

- Protocol in case of sickness
- House rules, with opening, closing duties. Teachers responsibilities
- My Profile
- domestic violence and child abuse protocol
- Food management
- Outings policy (uitstapjesbeleid)
- Medical administration
- Vaccination policy

For questions and/or suggestions, please contact:

Big Ben Kids General manager

**Big Ben Kids**

Zoutmansstraat 23  
2242 KG Wassenaar

Email: [bigbenkids@bigbenkids.com](mailto:bigbenkids@bigbenkids.com)

Tel.: 070 363 4070

Director: Leonie Wesseling

Tel.: 070 345 85 63

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<sup>i</sup>The words 'parent' and 'parents' denotes the parents or regular carers of the child.

<sup>ii</sup>The wording is a direct translation from the Dutch taken from *Opgroeien doe je maar een keer; ontwerp voor een Integraal Kind Centrum* (You only grow up once: designing an integrated child centre) Doornenbal 2011. Doornenbal was commissioned by the Trade Association for Childcare, the PO Council and the Kinderopvangfonds (childcare fund). We added the goal of 'healthy lifestyle'.

<sup>iii</sup>Childcare Act 2005

<sup>iv</sup>Research shows that children at out-of-school care like having the space to choose activities themselves and with whom they want to play.

<sup>v</sup>These are the first four of the six interactive skills taken from the quality monitor of the Nederlands Consortium Kinderopvang Onderzoek (Dutch consortium for research into childcare services).