The basic arrangement of the room consists of 4 to 6 areas, allowing children to choose an activity and play in an area.

The room where the children play is divided into 2 to 4 areas, allowing children to choose an activity and play in an area.

An area is a clearly recognisable zone in the room that is reserved for a specific type of activity. The area is easily accessible for the children (a house area, construction area, etc.)

E.g. While one child is making handicrafts in one area, other children choose to ride the bikes. The babies have a quiet area, an activity mat and an activity area, etc.

Apart from the basic arrangement, efforts have been made to create areas that are geared to the children’s interests and needs.

E.g.: An exploration area with all kinds of rolling material • a carpenter area • a ‘new ideas’ area • a hiding area

The areas are arranged in such a way that they enhance children’s play.

The dressing-up clothes can both be used in the exercise area and in the doll area, a rack with dressing-up clothes serves as a division between both areas.

Adjacent areas do not disturb each other.

E.g.: A quiet area is far away from an exercise area.

The available space is used in an optimal way.

E.g.: A piece of cloth replaces the door of a cupboard. The children can ‘hide’ in the cupboard and turn it into a cosy corner with cushions

E.g.: Because the play area is too small, the exercise area is moved to the corridor, where the children can ride the bikes.

The arrangement of the room is geared to the children.

E.g.: Photos and pictures hang at children’s eye level. • The furniture is at children’s size.
The room is surveyable and the materials are easily accessible for the children. Everything is placed in such a way that it invites the children to explore.

*E.g.*: The boxes, and if possible the cupboards, are marked with clear pictograms and pictures, helping the children find the material themselves. The material is stored in open shelves and cupboards without doors.

The children get the opportunity to play outside and this opportunity is used in an optimal way.

*E.g.*: The park nearby sometimes functions as an extra activity area outdoors.

**Material and Activities**

- Every corner/play area contains sufficient material for the number of children present: an offer that is not too limited but not too overwhelming either.
  
  *E.g.*: It is sometimes more interesting for the children to play in a kitchen with just a few pots, instead of having to choose from a box stuffed with kitchen material.

- The diversity of materials, and possible combinations stimulate the children's play.

- The material and furniture is maintained in good condition.

  *E.g.*: Books are not torn apart • Games and puzzles are complete • Doll's clothes are clean.

- There is a daily offer of guided and/or free activities.

  *E.g.*: The children can dance together on an appropriate selection of music.

- There is a weekly offer of guided and/or free activities. These can be adjusted during the implementation based on impulses and suggestions coming from the children.

  *Making handicrafts with boxes results in the building of a big camp, also using tables, chairs, etc.*

- The room contains materials that stimulate all areas of development: gross motor skills (*e.g.* a play tower), fine motor skills (*e.g.* a construction area), communication (*e.g.* book area), sensory development (*e.g.* an activity wall), spatial insight (*e.g.* sandbox), social skills (*e.g.* a doll area), etc.

- The materials and activities on offer are geared to the children's various needs, interests and developmental levels.

  *E.g.*: The material that is hardly touched at all by the children is put away for a while and replaced by other material. There are enough toys that appeal to both boys and girls. There is enough material for the different ages.
Constant efforts are made to bring sufficient variation and create new challenges for the children.  
*E.g.:* Old sheets are provided as a temporary offer. The children can use them as dressing-up clothes or to mark off an (extra) area. By means of a toy library new materials are introduced on a regular basis. Children receive the opportunity to use real, non-commercial materials: an old telephone, washing-up brushes, etc....

A lot of thought is put into the offer and the function of activities.  
*E.g.:* Children are not put in front of the television in order to kill time. The supervisors watch television with the children and start a discussion on what they see. A lot of thought is also put into the planning of the day.  
*E.g.:* Group work is introduced in order to create a closer contact between the children in holiday care.

Activities are offered based on the interests observed in the children.  
*E.g.:* A planned activity is cancelled because the children are fascinated by a caterpillar discovered on the playground.  
*E.g.:* Because an interest in babies was observed, an activity ‘giving the dolls a bath’ was offered.

These are possible work point(s) in order to ENRICH the environment:
2. ROOM FOR INITIATIVE ➤ FREEDOM AND PARTICIPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FREEDOM OF CHOICE</th>
<th>public or private day-care</th>
<th>out-of-school care</th>
<th>child care families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▲▲ When you give babies a toy, you give them something they like. Various materials are offered from which a baby can choose.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▲▼ During most of the day the children can choose from different activities and materials. They determine what they play with, whether they join an activity or prefer to do something else. E.g.: Children who love to paint can paint several pieces after another. Children who do not want to paint, are not forced to. Children can choose whether they participate in an activity on offer, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▲▼ If the space outdoors connects with the room indoors the children can choose themselves whether they play indoors or outdoors.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RULES AND AGREEMENTS</th>
<th>public or private day-care</th>
<th>out-of-school care</th>
<th>child care families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▲▼ Rules and boundaries are explained to the children, taking their level of comprehension into account. If possible, rules and boundaries are set together with the children. E.g.: The main criteria in making and changing agreements are: not hindering the activities of others, safety, maximum play opportunities for everyone, etc. You can change rules in the course of the year when the children are more familiar with the care situation. • Children can ride prams and bikes in the corridor, because there is more room..</td>
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<tr>
<td>▲▼ Rules and boundaries are explained to the children, taking their level of comprehension into account. E.g.: While the children are playing in the sandbox, the supervisors and children together determine the do’s and don’ts. E.g.: In the teenage area the supervisors and children together set out ‘no rules’ to make life in the setting more pleasant for everyone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▲▼ The rules and agreements have become so self-evident for the children that the supervisors do not have to spend much time enforcing them. E.g.: Children know that their coat belongs on the hook, that they can only play in the ball bath barefoot, that they have to do certain things in turns, that they must be quiet in the bedroom, etc.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Participation (Not applicable to babies)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>public or private day-care centres</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- The children can take some responsibility with regard to practical matters
  - E.g.: Children can help tidy up, set the table, etc.
  - E.g.: Every child in turn is responsible for the teenage area.
    - The supervisor can count on this person to be responsible for the ‘tidiness’ in that area.

- The children are involved in taking all kinds of decisions.
  - E.g.: Children help choose which drawings or handicrafts are put on the wall or they can bring something themselves.
  - E.g.: The 10 to 12-year-olds decorate their own teenage area based on the designs of their own ‘place of their dreams’.
    - They distribute the tasks among themselves. Children paint a board, construct a rack together with the supervisor, paint a piece of cloth to separate a quiet area from the rest of the room.
  - E.g.: The children who accompany a supervisor to the store can sometimes choose which vegetables they want to eat, etc.

**These are possible work point(s) in order to give the children more FREEDOM:**


### Stimulating Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>○○△</td>
<td>The supervisor gives impulses and hints during activities to enrich the children's play, creating new opportunities to continue their play.</td>
<td><em>E.g.</em>: When the children are riding their bikes outdoors, a 'petrol station' or a 'car wash' is created. This way, they are stimulated to use their fantasy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○○△</td>
<td>The enthusiasm of the supervisor (facial expression, eye contact, intonation, etc.) and the way in which activities are offered are appealing. It enhances their curiosity and motivates them to continue exploring.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| ○○△ | The supervisor asks questions or intervenes, stimulating the children to reflect on things, to discover things, to communicate, etc.  
  - *E.g.*: The supervisors attract the babies' attention when the light is put on. While dressing the children they ask them which piece of clothing they will put on first.  
  - *E.g.*: When a conflict occurs the supervisor helps the children come up with a solution. |
| ○○△ | The supervisor pays extra attention to children who experience difficulties getting started with an activity. | *E.g.*: The supervisor helps the child choose an activity |

### Sensitivity

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<thead>
<tr>
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</table>
| ○○△ | Supervisors take advantage of particular situations to pay individual attention to the children.  
  - *E.g.*: Nappy time is an ideal moment to have a 'conversation' with a baby.  
  - *E.g.*: Children are welcomed, get the time to become familiar with the other children and are guided in their (choice of) activity  
  - *E.g.*: Children who are not yet able to eat independently, are fed one after the other so that they receive individual attention. |
| ○○△ | The supervisor gives positive feedback on initiatives taken by children, by showing interest, asking questions, admiring or giving affirmation, etc. |
| ○○△ | The supervisor offers the children plenty of warmth, affection and care.  
  - *E.g.*: *E.g.*: The supervisors regularly take the babies and toddlers onto their lap.  
  - *E.g.*: The children are often cuddled or get a pat on the back. |
The supervisor regularly expresses into words what the child experiences.

Children are invited to express what they feel, do, think, expect.
*E.g. : After a story the children can tell whether they have already experienced something similar.*

Extra attention is paid and understanding is expressed to children experiencing difficulties.
*E.g. : Giving a new child some time to get used to the situation. Giving a child with a new baby brother extra attention.*

### Autonomy

- Children can choose activities that appeal to them and their choices are respected.
  *E.g. : The supervisor proposes to make a puzzle, but s/he does not force them. If they prefer to play with the cars and the dressing-up clothes, they can.*

- Children get the room to experiment, to do their own thing during an activity.
  *E.g. : The children themselves determine the outcome of an activity: an activity with boxes can result in building a camp.*
  *E.g. : Children can decide for themselves how they make something (which colours, materials, etc.) and determine when something is ‘finished’. Strawberries can be blue. The drawings do not have to be identical.*

- The supervisor gives the children enough space to be independent instead of doing everything for them.
  *E.g. : Children can take off the dressing-up clothes themselves, if they know how, even if this goes very slowly. A supervisor does not always have to join an activity. • If a child can tie his own shoe laces, s/he should be allowed to do so, even if it takes a long time.*

These are possible work point(s) in order to enhance SENSITIVITY AND STIMULATION:
### Atmosphere and relations

- **Positive:**
  - There is a relaxed, pleasant atmosphere: the children play, interact, sing, etc.
  - The children do not often argue, there are no cliques.
    - *E.g.: Babies look at each other and imitate one another.*
    - *E.g.: Before each meal (in holiday care) those who want to, can have a chat and tell jokes with the supervisor in the sitting area.*

- **Positive:**
  - The supervisor is part of the group. S/he does not keep aloof.
    - *E.g.: The supervisor is involved in the children’s play, even when s/he does not participate.*

- **Positive:**
  - The children have a good relationship with the supervisors, they can turn to them and seek contact without becoming too dependent.
    - *E.g.: The children ask the supervisor a question and (s)he goes into this. The children show him/her what they are doing, they let him/her comfort or calm them, etc. but they do not constantly cling to the supervisor or demand his/her attention.*

### Initiatives

- **Positive:**
  - Pleasant colours and soft materials have been used to decorate and arrange the room.
    - *E.g.: Cloths are used to make an area or veranda less chilly.*
    - *E.g.: A ceiling cloth turns the sitting area into a cozy corner.*

- **Positive:**
  - There is often music on, to sing along with or dance to or in the background to create a calm and relaxed atmosphere.
    - *E.g.: The supervisors sometimes turn on some music to help the children release their energy, etc.*

- **Positive:**
  - Room is made to ‘exhibit’ the children’s handicrafts or things they have been working on during the day.
    - *E.g.: In the corridor are the results of an experiment with clay. A high tower of blocks remains on the table for one day.*

- **Positive:**
  - The children recognise elements of their home setting in the room. The diversity of cultures is represented.
    - *E.g.: The children can bring music from home.*
    - *E.g.: Photos from their parents hang on the wall. The toys and posters depict various families. A language wall is developed for the supervisors and parents, with common words in different languages.*
Supervisors explicitly put effort in offering activities in which the children can experience pleasant moments together.

- E.g.: The children eat in a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere. Birthdays are celebrated. There is a cosy corner where children can sit comfortably together. Trips are organised.

In the way they intervene, supervisors express a concern to develop positive relationships among the children.

- E.g.: Babies in their rocking chairs are put close to each other so that they can see one another.
- E.g.: Supervisors help the children resolve arguments • The children learn to share and wait their turn. Children are stimulated to help each other. Friendships are noted and get their rightful place.

Activities and materials are offered in which children learn to distinguish feelings, to recognise them in themselves and in others and to communicate about them.

- E.g.: Supervisors tell children that it is okay to feel angry or frightened. Feelings are expressed into words by means of stories or a puppet show.
- E.g.: The different feelings are also present in the room: there are not only pictures of children who are laughing, but also children who are sad, frightened or angry.

These are possible work point(s) in order to make children FEEL AT HOME.
## Course of the Day

- The successive moments of the day and their duration are geared to the children's age and needs.
  - *E.g.:* There are moments to release their energy, quiet moments, moments when they are welcomed, etc.

- The plan of the day is made accessible for the children by naming them and using pictures.
  - *E.g.:* A day calendar is used with pictograms: each activity is represented by a symbol.
  - A clear signal is used to indicate that it is time to tidy up.
  - *E.g.:* For the babies there are fixed rituals in order to help them recognise the different moments of the day; *e.g.* a story is told before they go to bed.

- The day schedule is flexible with regard to the individual children's needs
  - *E.g.:* A child who is not thirsty can drink his/her drink later than the rest of the group. Children who need more structure get this.

- There are hardly any 'dead moments' during which the children have to spend their time 'waiting'.
  - *E.g.:* To be avoided as much as possible: children sitting at the table but having to wait until everyone has received a biscuit; waiting for everyone to have their coat on; waiting for the last parents to arrive.
  - *E.g.:* Tidying up and meal times are thoroughly planned so that the children can spend most of the time playing.

## Division of Supervising Tasks

- The supervisors are at any time ready and alert. They immediately respond in the child's best interest.

- If there are several supervisors they form a good team. There is an optimal distribution of tasks and flexibility in the response to observed needs.
  - *E.g.:* While one supervisor is still helping a few children, another can play with the other children.
  - *E.g.:* When someone is more needed in another area of the room the supervisors consult one another to make that possible.

- A child care family can seek contact with colleagues nearby or can attend a training evening in their community.
  - *E.g.:* You want to share your experiences with other child care families or make some agreements with regard to helping each other out during holidays, in case of illness, etc...
FORMS OF GROUPING

When children are assigned to a group, the kind of relationships existing among the children and between the children and supervisors is taken into account.

- E.g.: The presence of a certain child creates difficulties for another child.
- E.g.: When a supervisor and a child do not click, you should consider putting the child in the parallel group.

In case of mixed groups, some activities are organised according to the children’s age levels.

- E.g.: The eldest children of the group can play outdoors, while the younger children get the whole room for themselves.

Exchanging children between different groups is made possible.

- E.g.: Siblings receive the opportunity to play together or ‘visit’ each other now and again. Children who have just joined a new group, can ‘visit’ their previous group.

The rules of enrolment make it possible that siblings can join the same care facility.

These are possible work point(s) in order to be more EFFICIENT: