



Three Little Ships

International Preschool

Health and Safety Policy

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Introduction

Three Little Ships (TLS) is an international preschool that is part of the Haagsche Schoolvereniging (HSV). It has one group of 16 children aged 3 to 5 years old. The majority of the children are 3 and 4 years old. Some of the preschool children have additional needs and they may remain in preschool education until they are 5 years old.

The Health and Safety of children attending the preschool is of utmost importance to all the staff working at the school. We are committed to creating and maintaining a learning and play environment where children are protected from major risks - that could have serious consequences - and where they are taught to deal with minor risks.

The Head of School for the location is responsible for the Health and Safety Policy. However, the policy only works effectively if all team members feel included and work within the policy. When changes are made structurally to the way in which we work, we check whether the policy needs to be revised.

Staff are continually alert to any (new) risks to Health and Safety. If urgent, these are dealt with immediately. If the risk is deemed not urgent, then the matter is discussed at the end of the day.

At all times Three Little Ships follows the advice of the RIVM.

This policy is valid from October 2020 and will be reviewed at least every two years or sooner when big changes occur.

This policy is shared with staff, interns, and parents.

1. Mission, vision and goal

Mission

The mission statement of the HSV is: *Global citizenship, lifelong learning*. Within this, the purpose of TLS is to offer international expatriate children, both with and without additional needs, an optimal inclusive English learning environment where the children can develop and learn together. Our inclusive learning environment is a healthy and safe environment for young children aged 2.5 - 5 years old. This safe environment is created by:

1. Protecting children from major risks.
2. Teaching children to deal with minor risks.
3. Challenging and stimulating children in their development.

Vision

The HSV has four core values: *Respect, Connectivity, Responsibility and Safety*. TLS is a preschool where staff play an important role in the education, development and care of children within these core values.

Teaching children to respect others, form social relationships, take responsibility for their environment and themselves and act safely are all part of the HSV pedagogy.

The preschool teaches children to deal with different types of situations and challenges them to take on new learning. A healthy and safe learning and play environment underpins this.

Goal

The law for Innovation and Quality in Childcare settings (IKK) has shifted the emphasis for Health and Safety Policy from the Management to all staff. It is important that all team members feel responsible for the Three Little Ships Health and Safety Policy.

The most important considerations in the creation and maintenance of this document are that the Three Little Ships preschool team:

1. Become aware of all possible risks.
2. Carry out good policy in regard to major risks.
3. Have ongoing professional conversations with other team members and external experts.

These three aspects contribute to our goal which is to create a healthy and safe environment where children can play freely and can develop optimally.

2. Health and Safety in Three Little Ships

The safety of the children in TLS is an essential part of our preschool provision. A pedagogical program is provided in which children can experiment and challenge themselves, while doing this in an age-appropriate safe environment.

Safety agreements

There are a number of general safety agreements that have been made by the team that are adhered to:

1. Children are never left unsupervised in the classroom or playground. Whenever the children leave the classroom to move around the school building, a member of the team goes with them. When toileting, staff members use their discretion if the child can go independently.
2. There are always qualified first aiders in the classroom or within easy reach in the location
3. The doors have protective strips around the hinges.
4. The gate in the outside fence is locked during the school day.
5. The preschool Coordinator also keeps an attendance register that is taken with the group in the event of a calamity. In this way, the team knows which children are present.
6. Before children are taken [off-site](#), a written risk assessment is carried out by team members.
7. A formal annual inspection of large equipment, such as wall bars and swings in the gym, and the climbing equipment in the playground is carried out by an external company and a certificate is provided to show that the equipment is safe to use. Unsafe equipment is repaired or, where necessary, replaced.
8. Toys are inspected visually when put out for the children, when tidied up and when cleaned. Broken toys are discarded. Bikes are inspected monthly.

Major and minor safety risks

The starting point for attention to safety is to protect children from major risks and to teach them to deal with minor risks. By major risks we mean risks that arise because we place children in a situation that can have consequences for the safety and health of children. By small risks we mean situations in which a child may hurt himself without serious physical injury, but which are part of the child's development.

A. Major physical safety risks

We have identified the following major risks to the physical safety of children:

1. Falling from a height

- a. Soft flooring has been placed under the climbing equipment in the playground.
- b. Gym equipment is inspected visually by staff when it is put out for the children to use.
- c. A member of staff stays close to climbing equipment when the children are outside.
- d. For the children with mobility challenges, we have a physiotherapist on site to give advice about how to manage risks of falling.

2. Choking

- a. Children are closely supervised while they are eating. Food is cut into small pieces for snack and parents provide lunch which can be cut into smaller portions if necessary. If a child should choke, first aid procedures are followed immediately.
- b. Children are supervised when using small items, such as those in the sensory table (rice, macaroni, seeds) and are taught to use them appropriately.

3. Poisoning

- a. Glues, paints and other materials are all suitable for use by young children
- b. The fruit snack that is provided daily is washed before being given to the children.
- c. *All products that are poisonous for children are kept out of the reach of the children, in a locked cupboard or outside the class.*

4. Burning

- a. Hot radiators have thermostatic taps and pipes are covered with insulating material to minimise the risk of burns.
- b. Warm drinks are only taken to the classroom or playground by staff in closed thermos beakers.

5. Over-heating

- a. Windows are opened daily for ventilation.
- b. Roller-blind sunscreens are fitted to help reduce the sunlight and heat on hot days.
- c. In the summer, the children are required to wear hats and bring their own sunscreen lotion or spray from home.
- d. Water is available at all times, all through the year for children and is offered and refilled when necessary.
- e. In extremely hot temperatures, the GGD's Hot Weather Plan (Hitteplan) and first aid procedures are followed.

B. Major social safety risks

We have identified the following risks to social safety:

1. Inappropriate behaviour

- a. Staff to child
 - i. A four eye policy is in place.
 - ii. Concerns are addressed immediately by the preschool Coordinator.
 - iii. Serious concerns are taken to the Head of School.
- b. Child to child
 - i. An individual behaviour plan for a child who has difficulty managing behaviour is agreed on and implemented by team members.
 - ii. Strategies are used to show children what appropriate behaviour is in the classroom. This is done through visuals, Positive Behaviour Support, social stories and common language used by all staff members.

- iii. Children with additional needs who are sensory-seeking by touching, pulling, pushing, pinching and biting are discussed with the Sensory Integration (SI) therapist and individual protocols and sensory diets are put in place.

2. Child abuse

- a. Staff are checked through a declaration of behaviour (VOG) before joining the team.
- b. A HSV child protection policy is in place.
- c. Concerns are discussed with the Head of school and Leader for Learning and reported to [Veilig Thuis](#) when necessary.

3. Losing a child

- a. A morning and afternoon register is taken so staff are aware of how many children are present.
- b. Parents must inform the school if their child will not attend. If a child does not arrive and the parents have not informed the school, the TLS preschool Coordinator will contact the parents regarding the absence.
- c. At the end of the school day, children will only be handed over to their parents when leaving the school. Parents may designate a carer to collect their child. This must be done in writing via PARRO and photo ID must be provided to the school. All staff will be informed if there are (court) orders which prevent a child being taken out of school by any particular named person.

4. Off-site trips

- a. Before an off-site visit takes place, a risk assessment form is completed and signed by the Head of School. The risk assessment form includes a pre-visit to the location made by a member of the TLS team.
- b. The risk assessment includes the emergency telephone numbers of the parents of the children going on the off-site trip. It also takes account of safety and emergency facilities during the trip and at the location. A copy of the risk assessment form is carried by the preschool Coordinator.
- c. The ratio of children to staff on off site visits is increased to at least 1:4 Where children with additional needs require individual supervision, then additional adults are included on the trip.
- d. When children leave the school site, they are accompanied by TLS staff members and additional volunteers, such as parents. Volunteers who are not parents are screened beforehand and hold an up-to-date declaration of behaviour (VOG) and are added to the Register of Childcare Workers (Personenregister Kinderopvang). Volunteers and parents are not left to supervise children without a trained member of staff being present.
- e. A small first aid kit is always carried by a member of staff on a preschool trip.
- f. Children are counted regularly during offsite trips to make sure that they are all accounted for.
- g. On off-site trips, children wear fluorescent jackets over their sweaters or coats so that they can be easily seen by a member of staff. Children do not have visible name tags on trips so that strangers cannot call them by name. Children do wear a tag with the name of the school and the mobile number of the preschool Coordinator, so that they can be identified by professionals in an emergency.

C. Major health risks

All staff take general precautions to maintain the health of the children and for the prevention of the spread of infection. The following guidelines are adhered to by all staff:

- a. When incidents with bodily fluids occur, gloves are worn and the area is cleaned with a solution of all purpose cleaner.
- b. Equipment is cleaned regularly.

- c. The school is cleaned every day by professional cleaners. The staff sweep the classroom during the day if the floor becomes dirty or sand is brought in from outside.
- d. Tables are cleaned by preschool staff before and after play activities, always before and after eating and at the end of the school day.
- e. Toys are cleaned on a regular basis. If a toy becomes unhygienic by a child (for example, is put into the mouth) it is removed and cleaned immediately.
- f. The water in water activities in the classroom is changed at least daily.
- g. Children are considered to be sick when they have a fever ($\geq 38,5$ degrees), a contagious illness or when they have one or more of the following symptoms: continuous vomiting, diarrhoea or side effects from vaccinations (weepy, listless, generally not well). Parents are respectfully requested to keep their child at home for 24 hours after having a fever, or after having vomited, to avoid the risk of spreading the illness to other children in the class. We follow the suggested guidelines from the RIVM website or [Kiddi](#), the RIVM app.
- h. When a virus occurs in the Netherlands TLS follows the guidelines from the RIVM. In this circumstance extra emphasis on proper hygiene techniques are communicated to children, parents and staff members and how to maintain this at school and home.
- i. Parents are requested to inform the school if their child contracts a contagious disease, such as chicken pox. If necessary, the Head of School will contact the GGD for advice. Parents are informed via PARRO when a child with a contagious disease has attended or is attending preschool.

In addition to general health precautions, we have identified the following major health risks:

1. Food infection, food poisoning, food allergies

- a. Food provided by the school, such as fruit and vegetables are stored properly.
- b. Warm food is provided by parents in an unbreakable flask for their own child and it is the parents' responsibility to ensure it is safely prepared.
- c. Food brought by children is not shared with others.
- d. Cutlery and dishes are provided by the school and are washed in the staffroom dishwasher.
- e. When a child with a peanut allergy (or similar) attends the preschool, then the preschool becomes a peanut-free area. Allergies of children are highlighted by a care plan in the staff room so all staff are aware of dangers.
- f. When parents provide food for special occasions, they are asked to provide a list of ingredients for the food that they provide.

2. Gastroenteritis

- a. The classroom and toilet area have a hand-washing facility and paper towels for easy hand-washing routines.
- b. TLS has a hand-washing facility and paper towels.
- c. Children and staff wash their hands at the following times:
 - i. when their hands are visibly dirty
 - ii. before coming in contact with food
 - iii. after using the toilet
 - iv. after coming in contact with bodily fluids
 - v. after coming in contact with outdoor materials and sand
- d. The toilet facilities are thoroughly cleaned twice a day by a professional cleaning team and spills are cleaned in between by staff as necessary.

3. Respiratory infections

- a. Children are taught how to use paper tissues for blowing noses.
- b. Children are taught to cough or sneeze into the crook of their elbow or onto their sleeve, to help avoid the spread of germs on hands.
- c. The preschool is ventilated daily by opening windows.

d. The school is fitted with a CO2 extraction system.

4. Existing medical conditions

- a. Parents are responsible for giving medical information about possible allergies or conditions that require special attention.
- b. A record of immunizations is held in each child's confidential file for emergency information purposes only.
- c. Prescribed medication for long-term conditions is the only medication that is administered in school. Parents provide the medication in the original packaging on which the name of the child is clear. Medications are checked regularly to ensure that they are still in date. It is the parents' responsibility to replace out-of-date medication.
- d. Medication is kept in a child-safe box out of reach of the children. Medications that need to be kept cold are stored in the refrigerator in the staffroom.
- e. Protocols and procedures for individual children with medical needs are discussed amongst staff members and a care plan of that individual child is hung in the classroom in a known place for team members in case of emergency.

Minor safety risks

Our mission is to provide children with an environment that is as safe and healthy as possible. We want to prevent accidents or sickness as a result of, for example: unsafe or dirty resources. However, it is not in children's best interests to over protect them because:

- taking risks has a positive effect on the development of motor skills;
- taking risks improves self confidence, independence and perseverance;
- taking risks improves social skills.

We are proactive in identifying, managing and reducing major risks to protect children but minor incidents such as scrapes or bumps and bruises can happen at any time.

We allow situations with minor risks to occur in order to teach the children how to deal with these in an appropriate way. In play situations where there are risks, children need to adhere to the classroom or playground 'rules' to keep them safe. We explain the rules to the children when they first join the preschool and remind them as often as necessary. Visuals are used for children with little or no English or for those with additional needs.

Movement and exercise is considered by TLS staff to be essential to a child's development. It is only by doing, that children learn new motor skills. Gym lessons are organised once a week within school and children are encouraged to assess the risk of climbing, sliding, swinging, jumping etc and then challenging themselves to take the next step.

Children also play outside daily. Children are taught to dress appropriately and go outside. In this way, they learn that being outside in cold or damp weather does not make them sick.

In the preschool, we encourage the children to challenge themselves, try new things and experiment with new activities. We help our children to develop a growth mindset so that they have confidence to try new things; "I can't do it ... yet". Helping children to evaluate risks in their play helps develop their self-confidence and independence skills. When children feel fearful of trying something new, staff members will facilitate and model for children so they can make a better independent risk assessment for themselves next time.

In all activities, informal discussion takes place about the learning opportunity that the activity gives and how to do the activities safely. Children are asked open-ended questions, such as "what might happen if ...?"; "how can we do this safely?"; "how can we fix this?" to help them learn thinking processes about Health and Safety.

3. Risk inventory

The TLS international preschool is inspected annually by an external appropriately qualified organisation and a Risk Inventory and Evaluation is carried out.

In October 2024 the risk inventory was carried out by Peter Van Doorenmalen from Doorenmalen Services. In this inventory, he considered the major risks in the preschool.

TLS has been using VeiligheidNL's Risk Monitor since July 2019 and is starting again from April 2025 with the new updated version. This tool helps to provide insight into the risks that children / employees can experience with regard to Health and Safety. The Risk Monitor consists of a number of modules. TLS focuses on one or two modules every quarter. A part of the Monitor is carried out by Peter van Doorenmalen from Van Doorenmalen Services, the other part by the team members.

The TLS team will review the major risks in the light of any changes to the building and in the light of the new cohort of children, both those that are typically developing and those with additional needs.

Team members will work with colleagues who are proficient in Dutch. TLS has also bought in extra consultancy in regard to Quality Control and Health and Safety in the form of a 'Quality Officer and Pedagogical Coach' from the inclusive Childcare organisation Kombino (www.kombino.nl) in Zoetermeer.

The results of team discussion, Risk Monitor, advice from Kombino and Van Doorenmalen will be reflected in adjustments in this Policy document for Health and Safety.

4. Child protection

Inappropriate behaviour by adults or children can have an enormous impact on the well being of the child. In the preschool and in the other HSV schools, particular attention is paid to this subject. We have taken the following steps to prevent inappropriate behaviour and there are HSV procedures for what to do if it does occur.

Permanent faces criterion and Staff-student-ratio

There are four permanent staff members working in TLS. There is a ratio of one staff member per eight children. Since children with additional needs attend the preschool, an extra member of staff is employed full-time to support these children and the team. This means that three staff members are present each day.

At lunchtime, a volunteer lunchtime supervisor attends the class for an hour to enable the permanent staff members to have their break on a rotational basis.

For off-site trips, a ratio of one adult to four children is applied.

Staff qualifications and screening

All staff members have Early Childhood Certificates (Pedagogisch Medewerker 3 or DUO-recognised equivalent). All staff have up-to-date criminal record checks Verklaring Omtrent Gedrag (VOGs) and are added to the Register of Childcare Workers (Personenregister Kinderopvang).

Occasionally a child is admitted to the TLS preschool with complex medical needs or disabilities. This child may receive additional support in the classroom from an adult. This adult may not have an Early Childhood Certificate recognised by DUO but always has an up-to-date criminal record check certificate (VOG) and is added to the Register of Childcare Workers (Personenregister Kinderopvang).

The lunchtime supervisors have an up-to-date criminal record check certificate (VOG) and are added to the Register of Childcare Workers (Personenregister Kinderopvang). A qualified member of staff always remains with the children and the lunchtime supervisor is not left alone with the children. The lunchtime supervisor may supervise children in the toilet area but does not carry out intimate care procedures, such as nappy changing.

Parents may accompany the preschool class on school trips. Parents do not have criminal record checks. Volunteers who are not parents and who accompany the preschool class on an off-site trip do have criminal record check certificates (VOG). Parents and volunteers are not left to supervise children without a member of staff being present. Parents do not carry out intimate care with any child except their own child.

Four eyes policy

There are three members of staff in TLS preschool, daily. In addition, there may also be volunteers and lunchtime supervisors in the classroom. The preschool is situated within a mainstream international school with classes of children aged 4 and 5 on the same corridor. This means that there are always additional staff close at hand. In a calamity, staff from the mainstream classes and from the school office can be called upon to assist the TLS preschool staff.

The classroom and toilet areas have glass windows. The preschool is situated between the gym (used by the mainstream classes and the physiotherapist) and the Foundation class (four year olds); this means that additional adults regularly walk past the classroom and toilet areas. This situation reduces the risk of inappropriate behaviour or (sexual, psychological, physical) abuse by a staff member, lunchtime supervisor or volunteer.

During the preschool day, visitors have to come into the school building via the front door, which has an intercom system operated by the office staff. This limits the risk of unwanted visitors entering the school building.

Staff absence cover

Due to TLS preschool having a ratio of three members of staff to a maximum of 16 children, it is not essential, according to the law, to provide supply cover if one member of staff is absent.

When a member of staff is sick, the Head of School for the location liaises with the preschool Coordinator about the number of children that are expected to be present and their needs. Following this discussion, a decision is made by the Head of School as to whether substitute cover needs to be arranged. The manager responsible for substitute staff aims to keep a list of staff that can be contacted at short notice to provide absence cover. These substitute members of staff hold an Early Childhood qualification (Pedagogisch Medewerker or equivalent recognised by DUO), have been interviewed by the manager, hold a current criminal record check certificate (VOG) and are linked to Three Little Ships in the Childcare Register.

The Head of School, office staff and HSV international department staff on the ground floor are also available to support the TLS team for short-term absences, for example if a member of staff becomes unwell during the day.

Bullying

Everyone at HSV is committed to ensuring all children reach their full potential, socially and academically. In order for this to happen, we see it as our full responsibility to provide an environment where the children and staff feel safe and valued.

It is particularly important as HSV is a place where people of different cultures, nationalities and religious backgrounds learn together. We focus on positive social relationships to counteract undesirable behaviour, such as bullying.

The TLS has an adults' Code of Conduct, outlining how we expect all adults to behave towards each other.

In the TLS, we focus on helping children build positive relationships with each other. Any behaviour that is inappropriate is addressed immediately by explaining to the child why the behaviour was inappropriate and helping the child replace it with an alternative appropriate behaviour. We teach the children to respect differences (e.g. through our inclusive setting), show an interest in each other's family and cultural backgrounds and play positively with each other.

We use the Positive Behaviour Support strategies (PBS) to help children learn simple rules that form the basis of positive social interactions. Think of rules such as 'We keep our hands to ourselves' and 'We listen to each other'. We also use The zones of regulation and self-registration with The Colour Monster emotions.

Child protection concerns

TLS preschool is part of the Haagsche Schoolvereniging (HSV). The Head of School and the Leader for Learning are the named persons in the building responsible for child protection for the HSV in the van Heutszstraat location, including the preschool TLS. In some circumstances, this responsibility may be delegated to another (senior) member of staff. All concerns regarding Child Protection questions should be directed to these named persons.

If any parent has a concern about the health or well-being of their own child or that of another child in the preschool, the concerns should be brought to the attention of the Head of school or the Leader for Learning.

Training and support in recognising and dealing with abuse in line with the Dutch reporting of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse is provided by the School Social Work Service (SMW).

5. First aid

First aid qualified staff

All staff members are trained in First Aid within the TLS team, one of whom is present in the preschool classroom every day. Refresher courses are organised by HSV annually.

There are always trained First Responders (BHV) in the school building, although they may be in another classroom or in the school office.

Evacuation and fire

The TLS preschool is situated within the HSV international school. The Head of School is responsible for the emergency plans for the whole school location.

At least twice a year, an evacuation practice is held for the whole school. The first evacuation practice is announced beforehand to the staff and children. The second is unannounced to both staff and children. After the practice evacuation, an evaluation is made and possible improvements are discussed with the team.

There are fire hoses and fire extinguishers in the building. The nearest fire-fighting equipment to the TLS preschool is situated in the hallway next to the toilet area.

The fire alarm system is maintained by an external company and tested regularly.

Accident registration

A minimum of one member of staff qualified in first aid is present in TLS at all times when the children are present. When an accident takes place, the first priority is the child's wellbeing. For small injuries, such as cuts, scrapes and bruises, first aid will be administered by the TLS team. The child will be comforted and the parents will be notified at the end of the day.

If a child has a more serious injury, a school first aider is called to assess the child and administer first aid. The parents will be informed and advised to take medical advice from their family doctor, if necessary. Bumps on the head are reported to parents immediately and they are given the option of collecting their child and taking them to the doctor.

In the event that the first aider is unsure of the severity of the injury then the emergency services will be called for advice.

An accident report is filled in by the staff member/ lunchtime supervisor who observed the accident and signed by them, the first aider and the head of school. The report is uploaded to the child's confidential file. Any accidents are discussed informally at team meetings and procedures will be modified, if necessary. All preventive actions or agreements made about safe use of facilities are recorded.

7. Communication

Team Members

It is important that all team members feel responsible for the development and the daily implementation of the Health and Safety Policy of TLS.

All team members are actively involved in discussions about Health and Safety issues, not only in formal meetings but also in informal discussions throughout the day. In this way team members feel confident about discussing concerns that may arise.

New members of staff and substitute staff are given an introduction to the Health and Safety Policy and classroom rules are explained to them. New staff members may be given additional training, if required.

Parents

New parents are invited to visit the preschool with their child before the child starts in the school for a trial morning.

Parents are informed through the weekly newsletter, Parent App from the Head of School about any Health and Safety concerns. A message is sent to parents informing them of any infectious diseases (e.g. chicken pox, German measles etc), health issues (e.g. head lice, threadworms) or safety issues (e.g. building work, school trips) in the preschool. Notices may also be posted on the classroom noticeboard outside the classroom. Changes to staffing or the mentor lists are also posted on the noticeboard. Parents also have informal contact at the start and end of the preschool day when they can ask questions and be given individual information. Parents can also make an appointment at any time with the preschool Coordinators.

Health and Safety issues are added to the agenda of the Parent Committee.

Complaints

If parents have (serious) concerns or a complaint about Health and Safety matters, they should first talk to the preschool Coordinator or the Head of School. The official preschool [complaints procedure](#) is on the preschool's website.

This document is posted on the preschool's website: www.threelittleships.nl.