

LIBELLULE AND CO **EDUCATIONAL PROJECT**

Year 2023-2024

The creation of Libellule & Co

Clémence Dias de Almeida set up a childcare facility in 2020 after moving to Barcelona with her husband and four children.

In November 2020, Libellule and Co was located at Carrer Valencia 351 and welcomed just 10 children with two teachers who spoke only French. From September 2022, Libellule and Co moved to its current premises at Carrer Roger de Flor 98 and became multilingual.

The Libellule and Co daycare is a private daycare with 100% of its revenue coming from its own funds and payments from families.

The choice of the name Libellule symbolises the extraordinary physical and emotional transformation specific to this age (0-3 years) but also the journey through the different elements of earth, water and air. And the "and Co" stands for the desire for collaboration, co-creation, cooperation and cocooning that is so characteristic of the atmosphere at Libellule and Co.

The Libellule and Co daycare is based on two requirements:

- Respect the essential principles of early childhood care: care and hygiene, emotional well-being, caring and a safe environment for all.
- To offer parents an ambitious educational alternative based on 3 educational themes:
 1. Promoting children's autonomy at every stage of their development
 2. An exceptional staffing ratio to encourage individual attention, with a qualified professional early childhood educator for 5/6 children
 3. Offer a stimulating multilingual environment to adapt to Barcelona's international context

Facilities

Libellule & Co is a private daycare for young children located in the heart of Barcelona. The nursery welcomes children from 3 months to 3 and a half years of age all year round, and up to 8 years of age during school holidays.

In June 2023, the Libellule team will consist of Clémence (director), Sabrina (early childhood educator), Sandrine (childcare assistant), Aurore (psychomotricist), Sandra (early childhood vocational training certificate), Justine (Montessori educator), Amina (early childhood educator), Pamela (neuropsychopedagogue) and Roselia (cleaner). Three additional recruitments have already been agreed between now and September.

The Libellule and Co structure is an exceptional space in Barcelona with 1000m² dedicated to children, two patios, one of which is over 300m², specific areas for naps and all the classrooms with natural light.

The ground floor comprises two living rooms for babies, a cocooning and reading area, a large outdoor patio and three living rooms overlooking the patio.

On the first floor: two living rooms, a second patio, a large psychomotricity/nap room and a catering area with a professional kitchen and a refectory for the children's meals. Each living room is equipped with a bathroom: child-sized washbasins and toilets, as well as a changing area with an integrated bathtub and lockers for storing all the items needed to care for the child (nappies, wipes, diapers, etc.).

The daycare is divided into several classes, with the aim of accommodating children in mixed-age groups. The classes are distributed as follows:

- Baby sections: from 3 months to around 1 year (until the child is walking and/or only has an afternoon nap), with one room for meals/naps and another for educational activities and morning care;
- The mixed-age sections on the ground floor: three living rooms opening onto the larger patio, including a "dormitory" room, designed to accommodate 10 children per class for children aged one to 3;
- The mixed-age section upstairs: 12 children aged 1 to 3;
- La Classe Libellule¹ : a "Montessori"-inspired class for a maximum of 12 children aged 2 to 3 and a half (transition class before entering nursery school).

Libellule and Co is unique in that it encourages a mix of ages, but also in that its staff speak several languages (French, Spanish, English and Catalan). Children are therefore cared for according to their needs and, as far as possible, according to the parents' choice. As far as possible, the team tries to talk to and reassure the child in his or her mother tongue (and if not, in a language the child knows).

Nursery rhymes, readings and activities with a teacher other than the referent are also offered in different languages, to help the child discover another language and the multilingual nature of Barcelona.

¹ See below for the educational project specific to this class.

I. ACTIVE TEACHING

The Libellule and Co daycare aims to provide a stimulating and caring learning environment for children. Our pedagogical approach is based on the principles of active pedagogy, emphasising each child's rhythm, autonomy, caring and discovery of life in a community. This pedagogical project aims to provide a solid foundation for the overall development of each child, drawing on the contributions of pedagogues such as Freinet, Pikler, Montessori, Comenius and others.

The individual rhythm

"Learning cannot be rushed. Every child has his own internal calendar. By respecting their rhythm, we give them the time they need to explore, discover and assimilate the world around them." - Emmi Pikler

At Libellule, we believe in the importance of recognising and respecting each child's rhythm. We offer an environment where children can explore and learn at their own pace within the group. The educators carefully observe each child's interests, skills and needs (particularly physiological and emotional) in order to personalise their educational support.

The high points of the day, such as mealtimes, naps and diaper changes, reflect the educators' concern for the child's well-being and the quality of their relationship with the child, which is the best response to the child's need to play an active role in his or her learning.

The structure as a whole and the living rooms are laid out in such a way as to guarantee the comfort and safety of the children during dynamic or calmer moments. The various dormitories are available throughout the day, so as to respect each child's sleeping patterns. At any time of day, they can recharge their batteries and rest in bed.

For older children, if a child does not feel the need to rest during the "nap time" after lunch, a proposal adapted to their needs is always made (a calmer play time in the reading area, the patio or in a living room). Similarly, an older child can be offered a morning nap, or "free play" on the patio, if the child needs to rest or let off steam.

By giving individual attention to each child, we promote their harmonious and fulfilling development.

Children's autonomy

"Autonomy is not a destination, but a path. By encouraging children to make decisions, solve problems and take responsibility, we help them to become confident and competent individuals." - Emmi Pikler

Autonomy is a key element of our educational approach. Inspired in particular by the work of Emmi Pikler and Maria Montessori, we encourage children to develop their skills and independence. We provide a safe environment that is conducive to

exploration. We provide them with materials adapted to their abilities and encourage self-correction, thereby fostering their self-confidence and their ability to solve problems independently.

By performing certain everyday tasks on their own, under the watchful eye of an adult, children gain greater independence and freedom. Setting the table, clearing the plate, washing hands and face, getting dressed/undressed on their own... the educators know how important it is to let the child make their own experiences in order to evolve and grow. Practical activities (washing babies, cleaning chairs, watering plants, baking...) are organised regularly and are particularly popular with the little ones, who see them as a way of imitating their parents and developing new skills.

Free psychomotricity also prevails in the babies' section. Free psychomotricity is an approach that encourages babies to explore and develop their motor skills independently, without the constant intervention of educators. This approach recognises babies' innate potential to move and discover the world around them at their own pace.

For example, deckchairs are only offered at certain times of the day, for meals and in particular to aid digestion after a meal. They are not used as a form of childcare by the educators. Most of the time, babies are able to explore their environment directly on the floor and/or on a mat. This will enable them to get to grips with their bodies and move around more each day. By offering them a safe and stimulating space, they have the opportunity to move, crawl, roll, sit, stand and finally walk at their own pace. This approach respects each baby's individual motor development, without trying to rush them or force them to reach specific stages in their progress. When they succeed in performing movements on their own, they build up their self-esteem and confidence in their abilities. By moving freely, they can touch, grasp, smell, taste and hear the objects around them. This sensory exploration encourages their sensorimotor development and their understanding of the world around them.

Caring

"Caring is the foundation of all meaningful learning. By creating an environment where every child feels listened to, respected and loved, we create the optimum conditions for their development and fulfilment." - Célestin Freinet

Caring is a central pillar of our nursery. We draw inspiration from the work of Célestin Freinet to create an environment where every child feels listened to, respected and supported. We encourage open communication and dialogue, fostering the development of children's social and emotional skills. Our educational staff are trained to be empathetic, encouraging and sensitive to each child's individual needs, creating a climate of trust and well-being.

The educators on the Libellule and Co team are all qualified early childhood professionals in their respective countries. But more importantly, they are passionate about their work, about making children smile, giving them the care they need, helping them discover the world and awakening their creativity.

Kindness, support, active listening and respect for the children's emotions are the basis of the relationship between the educators and the children.

In this sense, an important aspect governing the professional practice of each of the educators is never to force anything. For example, a child will never be forced to finish his or her plate; children are invited to taste each food and discover the different flavors and textures.

A caring approach enables them to develop a relationship of trust with the adults around them. When they feel listened to, respected and loved, they are more inclined to explore, learn and develop. Caring interactions help toddlers to develop a positive self-image. When they are treated with respect and consideration, they learn to value themselves and have confidence in their own abilities. This fosters the development of their self-esteem and gives them a solid foundation for their emotional and social growth. A caring approach enables them to learn to recognise and express their emotions appropriately. Caring interactions with toddlers serve as a model for their future relationships. When they are treated with kindness, they learn to be kind to others. This fosters the development of positive social skills, such as compassion, empathy and cooperation. When they are encouraged to explore, make decisions and solve problems for themselves, they develop a sense of competence and confidence in their abilities. This promotes their overall development and provides them with a solid foundation for future learning.

Discovering life in a community

"Community life offers children the opportunity to learn respect, cooperation and mutual understanding. It is in the group that the social and emotional skills essential for their future are built." - Jan Amos Comenius

Our Libellule and Co daycare offers children the opportunity to experience life in a group from an early age. We are inspired by the ideas of educationalists such as Jan Amos Comenius, who emphasise group learning. We encourage group activities, social interaction and collaborative games. In this way, children learn to cooperate, share, respect others and develop a sense of responsibility. We also encourage inclusion and diversity, celebrating different cultures and promoting open-mindedness.

By interacting with other children who are also involved in free motor skills, they develop social skills such as observation, imitation and cooperation. Life in a group allows toddlers to interact with other children of the same age, whether smaller or larger, thereby fostering their early socialisation. They have the opportunity to learn to share, wait their turn, cooperate and resolve "conflicts". These early social interactions contribute to the development of essential social skills, such as empathy, communication and mutual understanding. By observing the behaviour and actions of others, they acquire new skills and knowledge. They draw inspiration from other children and are stimulated by each other's behaviour patterns and activities, especially where there is an age difference. They have the opportunity to express themselves verbally, to listen to and understand others, and to interact in a variety of situations. Interaction with peers and adults enables them to strengthen their language skills and develop their vocabulary. They learn the basic rules of group living, such as respecting others, sharing, cooperating and managing emotions. They



also develop skills of autonomy, adaptation and resilience, which are essential for their future.

The importance of rituals/routines

Routines and rituals play an essential role in children's daily lives. They provide a secure and predictable framework that promotes their development and well-being, and are essential in a daycare that is not the usual home environment. Routines and rituals provide a consistent and predictable framework that helps them to feel confident and better understand the world around them, and give children reassuring points of reference in time and space. This gives them a sense of control and reinforces their sense of self-efficacy.

The more familiar children are with the rhythm, places and different times of the day, the more autonomy they will be able to develop. Routines and rituals will also help children to anticipate and assimilate the different moments of the day over time. It's not uncommon for one or more children to exclaim, "Let's eat!" after the daily reading time before lunch. The children are reassured to know what happens next during the day and can more easily take ownership of each moment.

Rituals also provide an opportunity to introduce specific learning activities, such as nursery rhymes, finger plays and shared reading, which stimulate children's cognitive and language development. As part of the morning "Hello" routine, the children are invited to sit at the table and the same rhyme is repeated each morning, to help them memorise the rhyme, build complicity with their peers and provide a reassuring framework. As the year progresses, a real group dynamic is created, and the children enjoy naming their little friends and the names of their carers. These moments create secure bonds of attachment. The children feel loved, listened to and supported, which encourages their emotional and social development.

During the various common times (listed below in the daily schedule), the children have the opportunity to create their first links with their friends. The living rooms at Libellule are designed to encourage interaction and exchanges between children.

II. ACTIVITIES

Every day, the Libellule and Co team takes care to offer a variety of educational activities adapted to the skills of the children in its care. These activities can be grouped into two sub-categories: free play and supervised activities.

Free play

Free play plays an essential role in children's development and there are many advantages to encouraging it:

1. Overall development: Free play promotes children's overall development, as it involves all areas of development: physical, cognitive, social and emotional. Children have the opportunity to explore, manipulate, solve problems, express their creativity and develop their motor skills through playful, self-directed activities.
2. Autonomy and decision-making: Free play allows children to make choices and decisions for themselves. They are free to choose their activities, toys and interactions. This fosters their independence, self-confidence and ability to take the initiative. They also learn to solve problems independently, take measured risks and manage their emotions.
3. Creativity and imagination: Free play stimulates children's creativity and imagination. They have the freedom to invent stories and scenarios, create imaginary worlds and bring their ideas to life. This encourages self-expression, flexible thinking and inventive solutions.
4. Socialisation and social skills: Free play offers children many opportunities for socialisation. By playing with other children, they learn to share, collaborate, negotiate, resolve conflicts and respect the rules of the game. They develop social skills such as empathy, communication, cooperation and emotional management.
5. Intrinsic motivation and pleasure: Free play is motivated by children's intrinsic pleasure. They are naturally drawn to activities that interest them and arouse their curiosity. Free play allows them to engage in activities that correspond to their individual interests and needs, which reinforces their motivation and enjoyment.
6. Adaptability and flexibility: Free play encourages children to adapt to different environments, situations and roles. They learn to adapt to available resources, collaborate with different play partners and explore different perspectives. This fosters their mental flexibility, their ability to adapt to change and their resilience.

These free play times are a great indicator of each child's temperament and tastes: one child will sit and read a book peacefully in the reading corner of the living room or on an adult's lap, another will reproduce the gestures of a parent giving their child a bottle, another will go back over the activity presented the day before... At Libellule, these free play times are offered every day, particularly during morning welcome time or when waking up from naptime.

Directed educational activities

The second category of games is supervised educational activities. These correspond to the educational workshop offered every morning. Directed educational activities offer several advantages for the children:

1. Targeted learning: Directed learning activities allow educators to target specific learning objectives according to the needs of the group of children. They can design activities that encourage the development of specific skills such as fine motor skills, language, creativity, social interaction, etc. These structured, planned activities provide a framework for practising new knowledge and skills.
2. Teaching key concepts : Guided learning activities give children the opportunity to learn key concepts in a targeted way. Teachers can use teaching materials, games

and interactive activities to present and explain important ideas. This allows children to develop their conceptual understanding and strengthen their knowledge base in different areas of learning.

3. Structuring time: Supervised educational activities help to structure time. They provide a balance between free play and more structured time. Structure and guided activities help children to find their way through the day and to feel safe and confident in their environment.

4. Social interaction: Guided learning activities encourage social interaction between children. They can work in groups, collaborate and solve "problems" together. This develops their social skills, their ability to work in a team, to respect others and to communicate effectively. Directed activities also provide opportunities to encourage empathy, cooperation and mutual respect between Dragonflies.

5. Progress monitoring : Guided learning activities allow educators to monitor children's individual progress. By observing and interacting with children during these activities, educators can assess their skills, identify their specific needs and adapt their teaching approach accordingly. This provides individualised support and encourages each child's progress.

6. Preparation for formal learning: Directed learning activities play an important role in preparing children for formal learning at nursery school. They introduce them to structured routines, listening and active participation in a teaching context.

Educational workshops are an opportunity for children to explore a particular theme over one or more sessions. These activities can be shared (transfer workshop in a large bin shared by the group of children) or individual (transfer workshop with individual bin).

The educators draw up a monthly educational calendar of activities and propose different settings for the same activity to help the child diversify experiences. In the example of decanting (water, rice, playmaize, pasta, lentils, etc.), the child can experiment alone or in a group, so each child can go at his or her own pace and at the same time interact using a mediating tool. Painting, psychomotor skills, music, swimming, collage and drawing are just some of the many activities that children can explore at Libellule² !

Typical schedule

The following is an outline of a day at the Libellule daycare for children over one year old. This schedule is indicative and may be modified according to the needs of the children, the educators or the structure.

9am to 10am - Welcome: the children arrive gradually and enjoy free play time.

10h/10h15 - Morning snack: fresh fruit and corn cake. Time for songs to say hello and get the day off to a good start.

10.30am - Supervised educational activity proposed

11.15am - Gradual end of activity time and start of diaper changes

² See appendix for a non-exhaustive list of activities/skills developed

11.45am - Ritual reading time: one or more stories are read to the children to refocus before lunch.
12pm - Lunch
12:30/12:45 - Gradual end of lunch and individual visit to the bathroom to wash up/hand wash
12:45/13:00 - Start of siesta, children gradually put to bed
2pm/3pm - The children wake up gradually, change clothes and get dressed. In parallel, free play time.
3.15 p.m. - Nursery rhymes and snack time
3.30 - 3.45 pm - Hand/face washing
3.45pm - 4pm - Free play on the patio or in the living room
16h50/17h50 - Departure of the children

The Dragonfly Class - Specific features

A bridging year with an educational project specific to the child's development before entering nursery school

EXPERIMENTING, DISCOVERING, APPRECIATING, OBSERVING, LEARNING

Passerelle: feminine noun - A small bridge or temporary bridge.

In our Libellule daycare, in an environment suited to 2-3 year olds, La Classe Libellule offers children the opportunity to enjoy a unique experience.

In the Montessori-inspired La Classe Libellule, the emphasis is on developing independence, autonomy, self-confidence and practical learning.

This "bridging" class before the start of nursery school is a bridge to support children through individualised and respectful care in a safe environment adapted to the needs of each child according to their stage of development.

We know that this pre-school year is important for children and their families, which is why we wanted to design and create a space inspired by the Montessori pedagogy, where children are accompanied in a respectful, creative, empathetic and calm way. The child's natural learning process is a priority, and everyone is the protagonist of their own learning.

We want to create a stimulating and imaginative environment where children learn by following their innate curiosity.

This class focuses on the child's autonomy and capacity for initiative, in a setting where we work with Montessori-inspired materials and activities specific to this methodology.

Independent work is a time when children choose the activity they wish to work on. Based on individual observation, the space will offer a variety of activities designed to meet each child's current learning needs.

Directed activities encourage the development of creative and linguistic expression, as well as the acquisition of new general knowledge: raising awareness of literacy



and reading, discovering techniques of plastic expression, linguistic and phonetic stimulation workshops.

Art and its history will be our daily allies in supporting children in their various learning activities.

Schedule

9am - Welcome

9.30am - Assembly: Round of words, the children can share a feeling, a thing or an object that they would like to present to the group.

9.45am/10.15am - Language awareness in English

10.15am - Morning snack: fresh fruit and corn cake

10:30/11:30 - Independent work or guided activity

11.30am / 12pm - Patio time

12pm - Meal, preparation/serving/clean-up

12.45pm / 3.30pm - Quiet time / siesta

3.30pm - Snack

16h/16h50 - Free exploration

Enrolment in this Classe Libellule is subject to acceptance by the Montessori educator and the director. An additional cost of €25 per month will be added to the monthly payment (materials, teacher, etc.).

The Libellule and Co international day nursery is committed to providing an educational environment where children are actively involved in their own learning. By applying the principles of active teaching, paying particular attention to each child's pace, encouraging autonomy, cultivating a caring attitude and fostering the discovery of life in a community, we aim to develop in each child the skills, values and curiosity that will accompany them throughout their lives. We are convinced that this educational approach prepares children to become citizens of the world, capable of adapting and actively contributing to tomorrow's society.

Theme for the 2023-2024 school year

Exploring the four seasons through the senses

All the dragonflies in the different sections and according to their age will explore the four seasons through their senses.

October - November - AUTUMN

Exploring seasonal fruit and vegetables: pears, grapes, apples, chestnuts, etc.

Work on colours: orange, brown, purple, red

Study animals: squirrel, fox, bat

Exploring leaves

December - January - February - WINTER

Exploring seasonal fruit and vegetables: clementine, orange, kiwi, pumpkin, etc.

Work on colours: white, blue, black, grey, silver

Studying animals: bear, penguin, deer, chamois, ducks

The feel of ice

Exploring winter textures

March - April - SPRING

Exploring seasonal fruit and vegetables: strawberries, peas, carrots, etc.

Work on colours: green, pink, yellow

Study animals: butterfly, ladybird, migratory bird, cow,

Planting seeds

Exploring flowers

May - June - SUMMER

Exploring seasonal fruit and vegetables: watermelon, melon, peach, raspberry, etc.

Work on colours: yellow, red, turquoise, fuchsia

Study animals: dragonfly, bee, songbird, hedgehog, pig

Sensory water play

Exploring insects