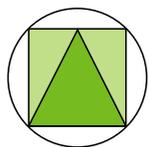




Annual Report 2019

FRÖBEL makes an impact



FRÖBEL
Competence for Children



Contents

Foreword	7	FRÖBEL continues to grow	36	Preventive child protection		FRÖBEL International	82
Our social impact		We create spaces for education	38	The power of participation	64	International affairs	
FRÖBEL makes an impact!	8	Our new centres in 2019	40	Projects with an impact		FRÖBEL welcomes the world	84
Our areas of impact		Partnering with universities		TraumRaum: Bolstering children's rights through interior design	66	FRÖBEL in Thailand	
We show what early childhood education can achieve!	10	Open pedagogy and architecture	45			Early childhood teacher training programmes	86
From the Supervisory Board		Pedagogy and quality development	46	Human Resource development	68	International exchange	
The value and impact of our work	12	Digitalisation in kindergartens		Human Resource development and retention		Serdecznie witamy – Bem vindo!	88
From the FRÖBEL Advisory Board		How digital media are changing everyday life in our centres	48	Opening up paths for development	71	The FRÖBEL exchange programme	
How relevant is social impact?	14	Digital educational documentation		Focus area: Bilingual Education		Kindergarten down under	90
		The Kita 4.0 project	52	More than just learning languages	72	Exchange in Europe	
FRÖBEL e. V.	16	Partnering with universities		Professionalisation		FRÖBEL meets ERASMUS	91
Facts and figures		FRÖBEL research and university network	54	The Kita-Fachtexte project moves forward	74	International exchange	
Company development 2019	18	Focus on research projects	54	Staff recruitment:		FRÖBEL goes abroad	92
Partnership with the Haus der kleinen Forscher (Little Scientists`House) foundation		Cooperation projects with universities	55	A spotlight on our professionals	76	Visiting FRÖBEL	93
10 years of the Haus der kleinen Forscher partnership at FRÖBEL	28	Language and reading development				Ten years of FROEBEL Australia	
FRÖBEL Academy		Language promotes participation	56			„A whole lot of noise!“	94
FRÖBEL-run college begins its second year	30	Projects with an impact		FRÖBEL for families	78	Bilingual Early Learning Centres	
FRÖBEL gets involved		German government sponsors		FRÖBEL family counselling:		FROEBEL Australia	96
In political dialogue	32	“Early-years Language Learning: Because Language is the Key to the World” programme	57	Language as a bridge	79	FRÖBEL in Australia	
		Child protection				News from the Little Scientists	98
		Child protection – a matter of course	60			Looking ahead	
						FRÖBEL sets out on the path ... towards more sustainability	102
						Contact	104
						Imprint	105



Dear reader,

In 2020, FRÖBEL will have been helping to shape the field of education and care services in Germany for thirty years. Founded as a small association in the post-reunification period, FRÖBEL has since developed into a highly reputable, 4,000 employee-strong non-profit organisation whose voice carries a certain weight in the sector, the political sphere and among the general public.

That public recognition makes us proud of what we have all done together over the past decades. We feel that our responsibility to have a social impact has increased just as much. Now is not the time to slow down efforts but to push for more quality in the field of education and care services. We must continue to strive for decent framework and working conditions for the many committed people who achieve great things with competence and enthusiasm every day in our nurseries, kindergartens and after-school care centres.

For this reason, we are dedicating our 2019 annual report to the impact of our work. Social impact means changing people's attitudes or behaviours in order ultimately to change society for the benefit of all. We want to achieve this through greater participation and fairness in education.

We have therefore examined the potential impact that the daily work of our professionals and our individual projects can have in our centres – or what they have already changed: for children, families and the local community.

Find out for yourself. We wish you pleasant reading!

Stefan Spieker

Chairman of the Board FRÖBEL e. V.

Dr. Gudrun Rannacher

Board Member FRÖBEL e. V.

FRÖBEL makes an impact!

What drives us?

With excellent education and care services, we ensure that all children at FRÖBEL have the same opportunities for education and, consequently, have a stake in society. We take their rights seriously. We let them have a say and take part in decision-making. We help them gain independence and confidence, learn to respect others and assume responsibility for their actions.

Social responsibility

Early childhood education lays the framework for children's success in their educational trajectory. It enables them to develop well, feel at ease, know their rights and learn that those rights bring responsibilities with them.

What are we investing?



- ▶ 4,000 dedicated employees in 11 federal states
- ▶ 30 years of experience and expertise as an educational and organisation
- ▶ The commitment of 3,900 sponsors and 7,000 volunteers
- ▶ Material and financial resources through self-generated contributions
- ▶ Networks with strong partners such as the Haus der Kleinen Forscher (Little Scientists' House) foundation and Stiftung Lesen

What do we want to achieve?



We want a just society in which all children have equal opportunities to participate, regardless of their social or cultural background. All children should feel that their rights, as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, are recognised and upheld.

Good nurseries, kindergartens and after school care make an impact!

Children

- ▶ build up self-efficacy through encouragement, and develop their creativity and curiosity
- ▶ receive loving care from people who take their rights seriously
- ▶ strengthen their social skills in a tolerant and prejudice-conscious community

Parents and families

- ▶ take on more responsibility for their children's education
- ▶ receive support and inspiration for child development and education issues
- ▶ find a balance between family life and work

Communities and social areas

- ▶ increase their attractiveness for families thanks to high-quality childcare service
- ▶ gain a focal point for activities, including for volunteers
- ▶ ensure equal educational opportunities for all children at the early childhood education level

What do we provide?

- ▶ The best possible starting and education opportunities for children from all families in our FRÖBEL centres
- ▶ Involvement of parents and families
- ▶ High-quality early childhood education
- ▶ Political commitment to the social recognition of early childhood educators

- ▶ Modern professional development and training for employees through specialist and management career opportunities
- ▶ International promotion of the achievements of German early childhood education



We show what early childhood education can achieve!

In principle, the framework of our educational mandate is established in the individual educational curricula and programmes of Germany's federal states. However, we as a provider are free to set our own priorities within that framework. Naturally, none of our priorities are inconsistent with the curricula; rather, by focussing on specific topics, we want to give the children in our care something special on their path through life. So while each centre decides on its own focus areas, as a provider we stand for certain causes and fields of activity:

#1 We attach great importance to our children receiving the best in linguistic and individual support. We **foster language** development in our daily routines and projects, and keep an eye on every child in the process. Every centre ensures that, wherever possible, no child is left behind and that all the children at FRÖBEL have a successful start at school. With partners such as Stiftung Lesen and many regional networks, we strive to provide the best possible support for every child.

#2 We attach great importance to **research-based learning** as a standard practice. We believe children should be able to ask questions, explore and explain their environment, and question all subjects and phenomena with which they come into contact. As a partner of the Haus der Kleinen Forscher (Little Scientists' House) foundation, we receive a wealth of ideas and suggestions. We attach great importance to the fact that even seemingly "difficult" topics in the science, mathematics and technology fields are playfully integrated into the daily routine.

#3 We attach great importance to the particular function of **education for sustainable development**. Children have a right to decent environmental and living conditions in the future, and right now the groundwork is being laid for this. Children can learn how complex factors work together and also learn to take responsibility for their surroundings.

#4 We attach great importance to a sound **democratic education** and active **participation**. Especially today, it is important to learn how decisions are made and accepted in a group, and what opportunities there are to participate from the start. This begins with the children's parliament (also see below page 64-65), and continues up to the election of children mayors. In addition, children should get to know the foundations of our democracy from an early age. They should get to experience politicians with their families in their centres and have discussions with them, and discover places such as (city) parliaments and government offices for themselves.

#5 We value the potential of **cultural education** and harness it for our centres. We forge links with the cultural world by inviting professionals from the field to our centres and by visiting places in our cities and municipalities where art and culture are part of the fabric of everyday life. In doing so, we are tapping into a wonderful source of inspiration and it is our desire to encourage parents and families to participate.

We will continue to develop and expand these five exemplary fields of activity over the next few years.

To realise these special projects, we have also been cooperating with other institutions and external partners – from foundations to concert halls and political institutions – which enriches the daily educational programme. We regularly check the effectiveness of these initiatives in order to spotlight the work of our colleagues in FRÖBEL centres and help that work gain recognition.

Stefan Spieker
Chairman of the Board
FRÖBEL e. V.



The value and impact of our work

The motto for the 2019 Annual Report is “impact”. The questions which arise are the following: What impact has FRÖBEL's work achieved – on both a large and small scale – for children, within the workforce, in the public sphere and, last but not least, on the supervisory board?

First of all, from the Supervisory Board's point of view, the 2019 financial year seamlessly builds on the successes of previous years – all the results of which can be read about in this annual report. FRÖBEL stands out as a comparatively large non-profit organisation and has considerable growth potential. This is in line with how we are perceived in the public sphere as well.

The increasing public acknowledgement of the work at our centres can undoubtedly be assessed, nay, honoured as being the result of a consistently high level of commitment to quality improvement in our nurseries, kindergartens and after school

care. By the end of 2019, 110 of our 190 centres had undergone external evaluation. The Supervisory Board is deeply appreciative of our employees' willingness to reflect on their own work and their team's impact.

However, the public also recognises in particular the dilemma faced by FRÖBEL and many other companies in the social sector: although FRÖBEL has almost 4,000 employees, provides high-quality early childhood education services that contribute to the benefit and well-being of over 17,000 children and their families, and campaigns for significant improvements in the quality of its own work in all areas, the public debate continues to focus on the controversial issue of adequate funding, with little reference to the work actually done on improving quality.

Social return on investment: educational work brings social added value

Ultimately, all companies in the social economy always associate their services with a “social return on investment” (SROI), i.e. what they have achieved for the local community or society as a whole. FRÖBEL is fighting in parliaments and administrations from the municipal to the national level in order to raise awareness of the “social return” generated by the daily pedagogical work of our early childhood educators.

What distinguishes us is that we do not simply accept our education system's traditional

bureaucratic structures and their funding models. Rather, we also advocate at the institutional level for the prospects and educational opportunities of the children in our care as well as the working conditions of our employees. Not always an easy path to tread.

However, like the public funding institutions, we know that employees are the greatest asset in a social enterprise: they are the heart and soul of the company. The achievement of our corporate goal is above all connected to the services they provide. With this knowledge, we at FRÖBEL are able to endure. If we were to refrain from defending the value of our work or to lose momentum even slightly, we would lose credibility in our core area.

Rainer Borgmann-Quade

Chairman of the FRÖBEL Supervisory Board



Rainer Borgmann-Quade
Chairman of the
FRÖBEL Supervisory Board



How relevant is social impact?

Words carry weight. In Germany, where education is largely paid for by the state, one often hears the terms “funding”, “grants” and “subsidies” in reference to public money that goes into the areas of education and culture. In reality, we are talking about investments in the future of our society.

The term “investment” is usually associated with for-profit companies and projects that generate returns, which are in turn associated with positive added value. Such terminology is usually considered unsuitable for the non-profit world.

I think that is debatable. For, just as investments in for-profit companies generate positive or negative returns (of the financial kind), educational and cultural institutions arguably also generate returns (of the social and financial kind), which are then fed back into the state and society.

Social return on investment sets out to show precisely those returns with a view to making their qualitative impact more visible. And in times of non-transparent banking transactions, ethically questionable investment funds and increasing corruption, the question that should be asked is: “Which returns are more beneficial for the future of our society?”

In order to increase the visibility and raise awareness of those social returns, institutions must develop and implement systems that can be leveraged both for their own work and for political argumentation.

The right way involves the institution feeling intrinsically obliged to generate social impact and to push to make that impact visible.

FRÖBEL has recognised this and intends to spotlight its impact even more in the future. In the field of

early childhood education, social impact can be made very visible indeed.

However, many returns in this area only reveal themselves if they are long term. It is necessary to establish systems at an early stage in order to demonstrate the medium to long-term effects.

The more consistently the impact can be shown, the better that return can be used in social and political dialogue.

I am convinced that the future of how early childhood educators and education and care services are valued ideologically and financially is inextricably linked with this kind of impact measurement.

Prof. Dr. Gesa Birnkraut,
FRÖBEL Advisory Board



Prof. Dr. Gesa Birnkraut,
FRÖBEL Advisory Board





FRÖBEL e. V.

Company development 2019

Period ending 31 December 2019

Turnover 2009–2019 (in thousands of EUR)

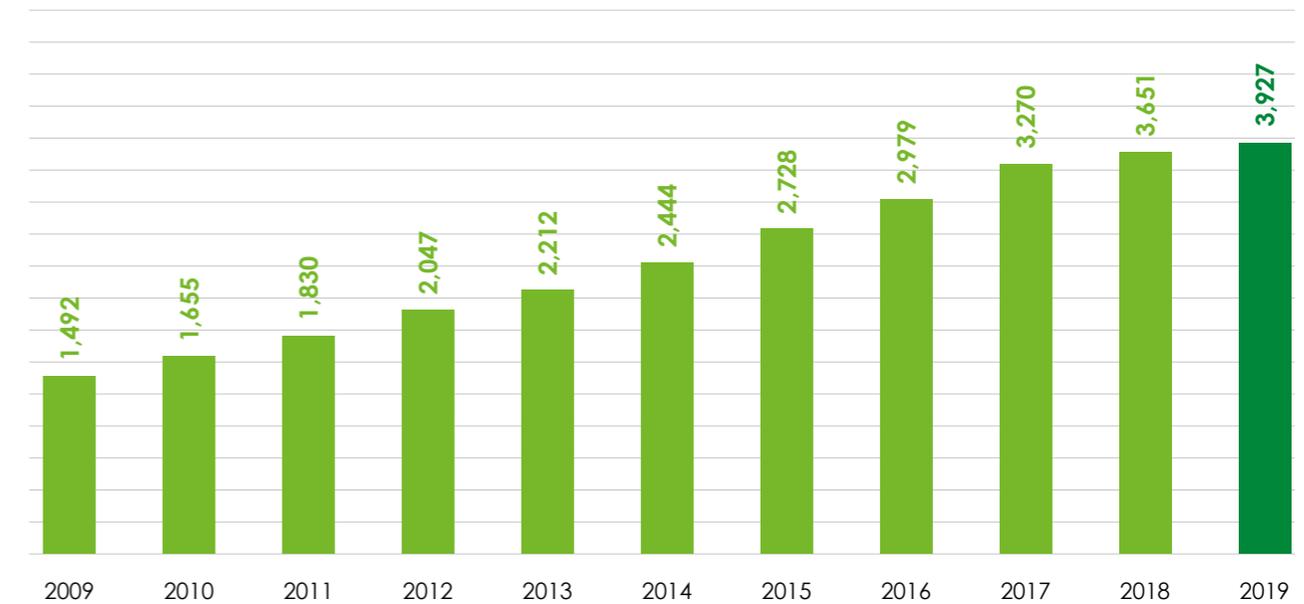


Number of children 2009–2019*



*Germany

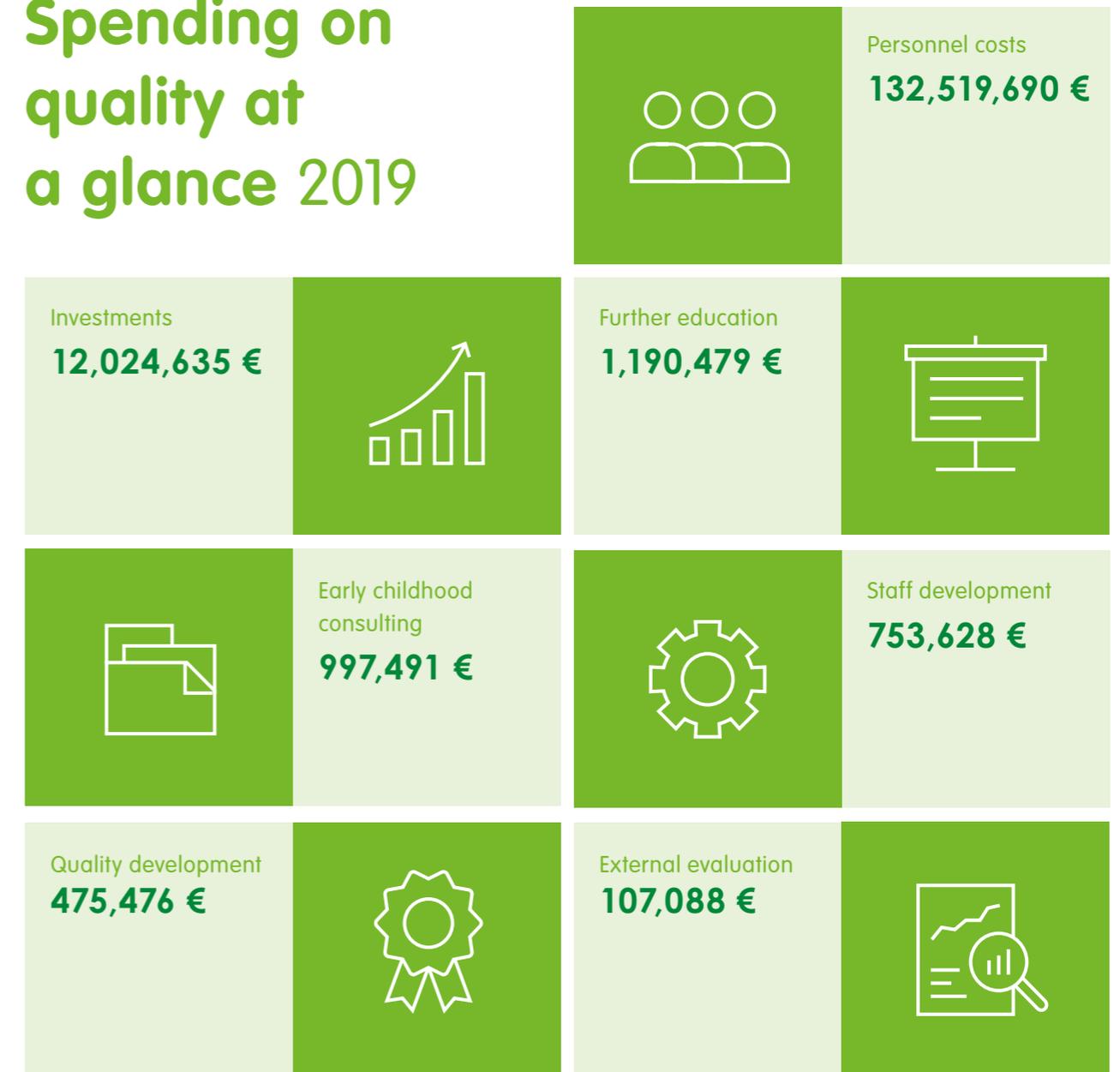
Number of employees 2009–2019*



*Only FRÖBEL Bildung und Erziehung gGmbH, e. V. and Academy.



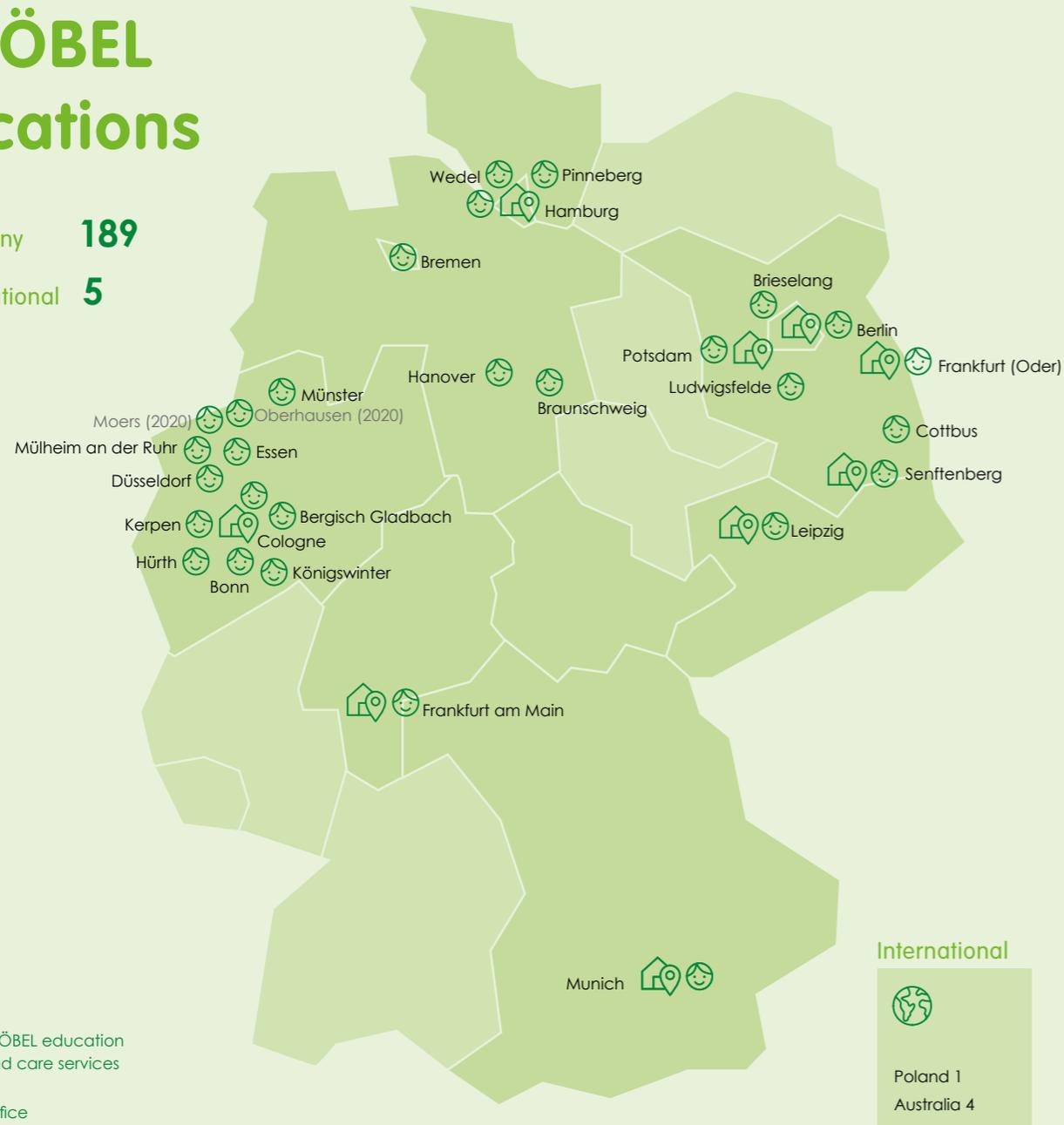
Spending on quality at a glance 2019



FRÖBEL locations

Germany **189**

International **5**



FRÖBEL education and care services

Office

International

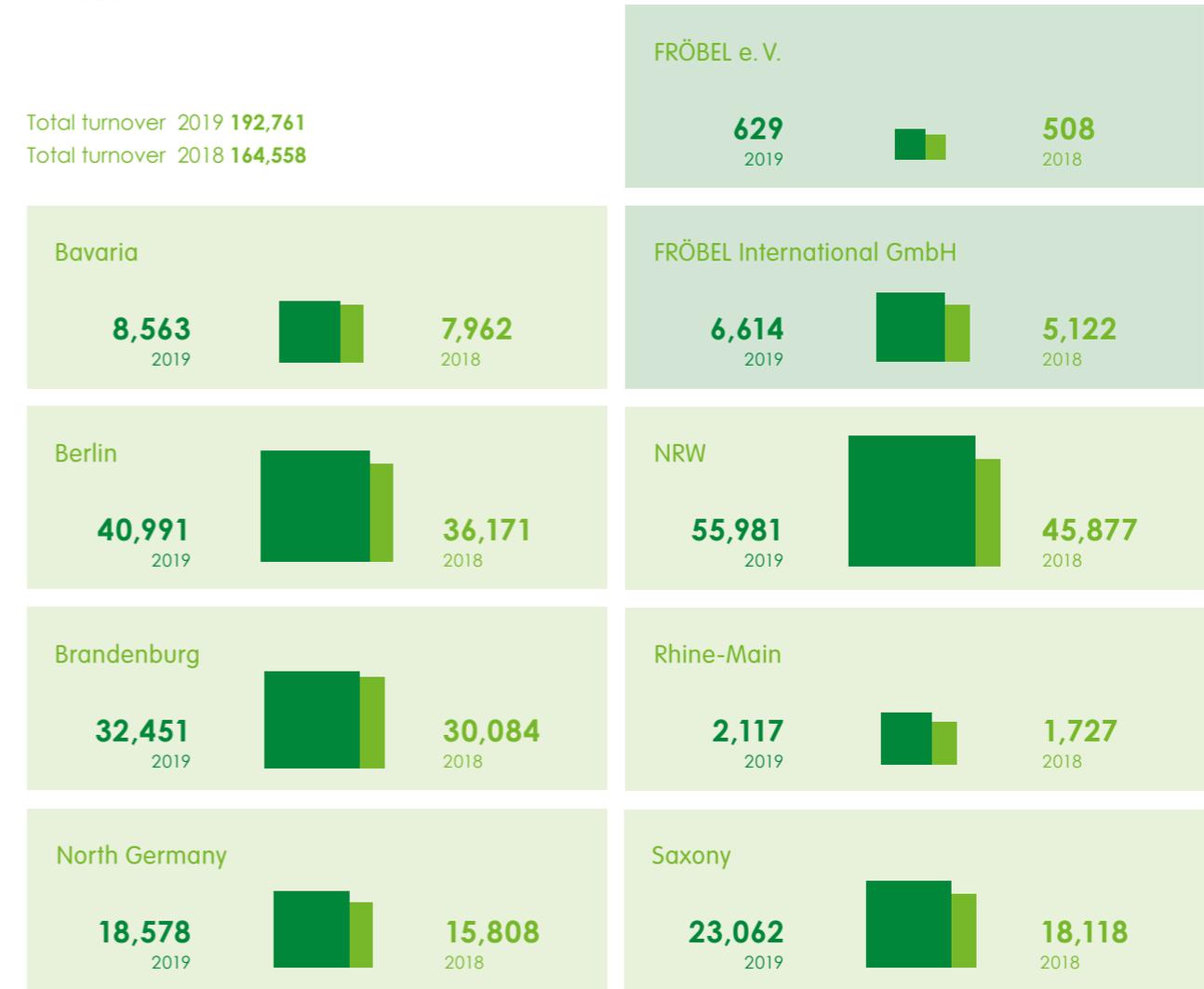


Poland 1
Australia 4

Turnover 2019*

FRÖBEL Bildung und Erziehung gGmbH
FRÖBEL e. V.
FRÖBEL International GmbH

Total turnover 2019 **192,761**
Total turnover 2018 **164,558**



* Turnover in thousands of EUR

Educator-to-children ratio

2019 In Germany Staff: **3,927** Children: **16,470** Internationally 141 475

■ Employees ■ children in our care



Personnel structure 2019

in Germany

Total number of staff



Education professionals



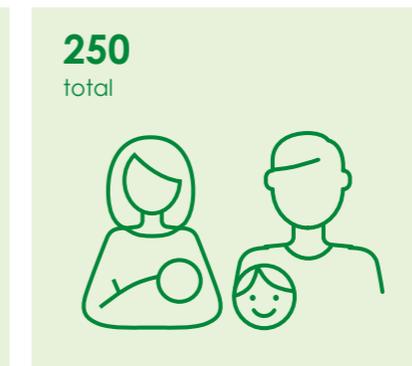
Food services, housekeeping, technical support



Education professionals
Proportion of men



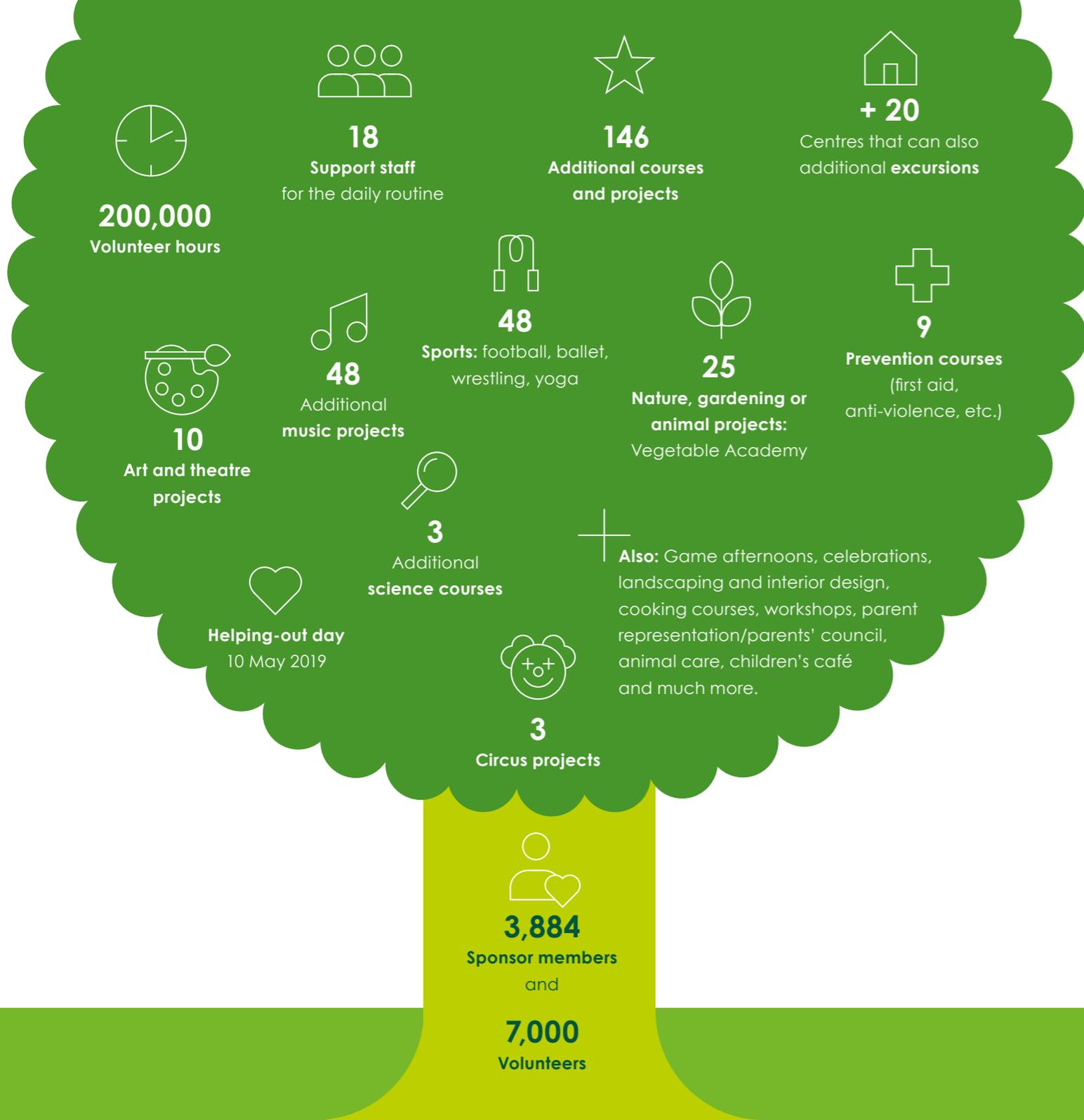
Mandatory leave, parental leave, maternity leave



Nationalities



* Fachkräftebarometer [National survey of early childhood education professionals] 2019



Sponsor memberships and volunteers

Your commitment bears fruit

Thanks to the growing group of sponsor members and the overwhelming number of volunteers (7,000!), we were able to offer a total of 146 additional educational courses and excursions.

All children at FRÖBEL benefit directly from the commitment of our volunteers and the support of our sponsor members. By providing excellent early childhood education for all children, you are supporting equal opportunities and building educational equality.

And for that we thank you very much!

Impact targets



Children: experience diversity and receive better encouragement



Professionals: feel supported and appreciated



Parents: assume joint responsibility for their children's education



Volunteers/sponsor members: have fun during a meaningful activity

10 years of the Haus der kleinen Forscher partnership at FRÖBEL

FRÖBEL has been cooperating with the Haus der Kleinen Forscher (Little Scientists' House) foundation for 10 years. We have conducted exciting experiments for around 8,000 children. We have inspired them to be curious, ask questions, explore phenomena and develop their own ideas.

All FRÖBEL centres are on track to be certified as "Little Scientists' Houses" by the end of 2020.

With our successful efforts in the partnership, we are helping to ensure that STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and ESD (education for sustainable development) have a firm place in early childhood education.

Thanks to our professional development and training courses, educators are well-equipped to accompany the children in their experiences and explorations and to shape the entire kindergarten routine as a space for discovery.



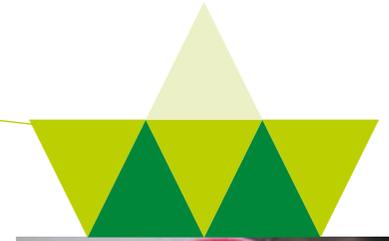
Wir sind Netzwerkpartner der Stiftung „Haus der kleinen Forscher“
www.haus-der-kleinen-forscher.de



≈ 8,000 children reached



600 professionals underwent professional development and training



countless exciting experiments



16 science and technology mentors



180 research areas*

*there is a science room or area in every FRÖBEL kindergarten

92 certified centres



1000 m of science along the "Experiment and Research Route" on Little Scientists Day

FRÖBEL-run college begins its second year

On 5 August 2019, 23 students began their work-based learning programme at the FRÖBEL Academy – College for Social Pedagogy in Berlin. In addition to language development, the main areas of specialisation at the FRÖBEL Academy are working with children under three years, and nature and media education. The study programme is marked by a strong connection between theory and practice. Reflection, a key competence in this profession, is practised right from the start. The course at the FRÖBEL Academy is particularly attractive because it takes place alongside work and is linked to a paid part-time job in a FRÖBEL centre.

The second group of students at the FRÖBEL Academy – College for Social Pedagogy in Berlin



The first group of students at the Academy have completed their first year. Up to now our commitment to closely linking theory and practice and thus make the training as hands-on as possible has worked well. This can be seen in the good results achieved in the students' exams and in the positive feedback from their internship supervisors in the kindergartens.

From the academy to the kindergarten

If they are to successfully initiate and guide children's educational processes, educators must above all pay attention. That way they can understand and respond to children's individual areas of interest and ways of learning. In-depth knowledge in specific areas of early childhood development is also necessary. In order to develop this extensive and detailed knowledge independently, the students at the FRÖBEL Academy were given the task of designing and developing prototypes for activities about child development.

They came up with games that promote motor, linguistic, cognitive, social-emotional and psychosocial development. These activities make learning child's play – and, most importantly, fun. The games were conceived using the "design thinking" method – a method that the students can use in many other areas of their professional activities.

www.froebel-akademie.de

Word Treasures

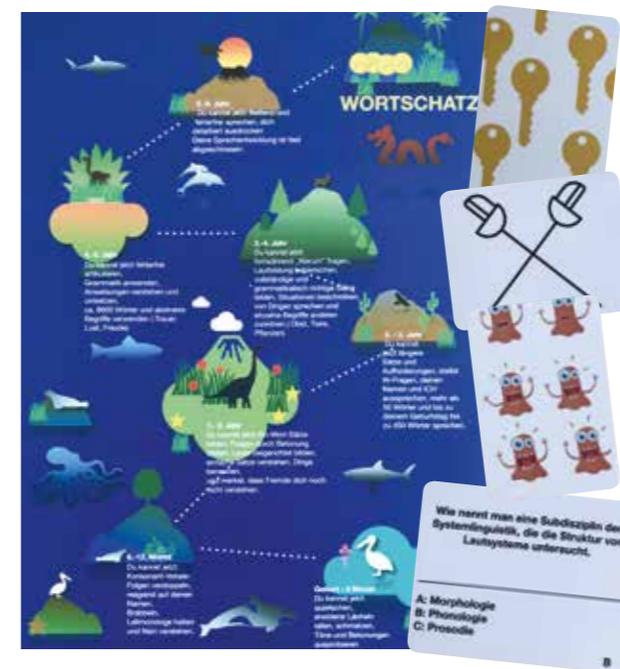


In this game, players focus on language development. Each time players answer a question correctly, they can move to the next island on the board. Once they reach the final island, they can unearth the buried Word Treasure – provided they have acquired at least three "key cards" over the course of the game. "Monster" and "Duel" cards turn the journey from island to island into an adventure.

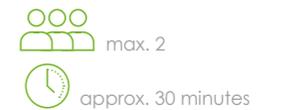
Purple Brain



This game deals with children's cognitive development. The aim is to correctly answer as many questions as possible in this area of development. Players get a purple stone (brain cell) for each correct answer. The player with the most brain cells at the end of the game wins. The game helps players acquire and reinforce knowledge about cognitive development with ease.



Social Emotional



The board mirrors our journey through life – it starts with birth and, at the end of life, the players reach the heavenly kingdom. Along the way, players have the opportunity to gather insights and knowledge about the social-emotional development of children (and themselves) – divided between action and information cards. The title of the game is a clue: the game invites us to reflect on ourselves.



In political dialogue

FRÖBEL has been actively involved in political discussions for years at the local, federal state and national level. We critically monitor legislative proposals and their implementation, organise events on early childhood education topics, and welcome representatives from politics and public offices at our centres. Our aim is always to improve the basic conditions for early childhood education in Germany in the interest of children and education professionals.

2019 elections in Brandenburg: Fact check

We at FRÖBEL continued making our voice heard in 2019 and, in the run-up to the elections, questioned the parties in the Brandenburg State Parliament on the priorities they had set for the Brandenburg state election. We asked the largest parties about their plans for further developing the area of childcare. From their answers, we developed policy benchmarks for the election that we will continue to use for political communication over the legislative period.

Bringing politics to kindergartens: An “internship” for local parliamentarians

We are happy to invite politicians to our centres, particularly if they are unfamiliar with our field, so that they can experience daily life in a kindergarten and get to talk to early childhood educators. After all, anyone who makes policy decisions concerning early childhood education should see it in action. Politicians in Brandenburg took us up on our offer to complete an “internship” at our kindergartens. And from statements posted on social media, it is clear that the experience has had a lasting impact on many of them.

We also provide international guests with insights into how we work. Alongside her French counterpart Christelle Dubais, State Secretary Juliane Seifert from the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs visited the FRÖBEL-Kindergarten Schatzinsel Berlin last summer to exchange ideas with our pedagogical team. Discussion topics included the different early childhood education systems, quality development opportunities based on external evaluations, and professional development and training.



State Secretary Seifert and Christelle Dubois at FRÖBEL in Berlin



Cologne's mayor Evi Scho-Antwerpes at the Longest Lab Bench in Cologne

Kindergartens in action: Making good education visible

We like to demonstrate the concrete benefits of early childhood education. To that end, we also take advantage of local events with no direct connection to political issues to promote our interests. For this reason, we invited Serap Güler, State Secretary for Integration in the North Rhine-Westphalian State Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Integration, to the *Längster Forschertisch in Köln* (Longest Lab Bench in Cologne) action day. And it worked: she was enthusiastic about FRÖBEL's wide-reaching commitment to excellence in early education, in particular in STEM subjects.

Serap Güler: “It was wonderful to see the children's enthusiasm as they tinkered and experimented at the **Longest Lab Bench in Cologne**. The earlier we arouse children's interest in science and technology, the better we can discover gifted children and promote talent.”



State Secretary Serap Güler in conversation with FRÖBEL professionals



The future of early education

We consider it a particular success that we are increasingly reaching representatives from politics and ministries with our events for professionals. Our **Early Childhood Pedagogy Conference** at the German Bundestag on the subject of **"The future of early education"** was so well received that we posted the video of the lecture delivered by Dr Andreas Schleicher on our website. The event took place in cooperation with the Haus der Kleinen Forscher (Little Scientists' House) foundation.

www.froebel-gruppe.de/plenum-2019

Standing together for high quality: policy talk with partners

In September, we organised a policy dialogue on early childhood education in partnership with the Internationalen Bund (IB). As a provider operating in various regions, we would like to see more transparency in the quality development process and comparable standards across the country. Together with 70 guests from the Bundestag, the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs and the Berlin Senate Department for Education, we debated the subject "Childcare centre quality – Is Germany's early childhood education system in danger of geographical inequality?" One idea that caught many guests' attention was the concept of an education charter. In light of the huge success, we will be repeating the event in 2020.

"Today's childcare centres shape tomorrow's society."

Dr Andreas Schleicher, educational researcher



Dr Andreas Schleicher

"We need a charter for everyone who wants excellence in early education to end the 'education lottery'."

Michael Fritz, CEO of the Haus der Kleinen Forscher (Little Scientists' House) foundation



Michael Fritz



**FRÖBEL continues
to grow**

We create spaces for education

We believe that spaces and architecture have a strong influence on the people who inhabit them. This is especially true for buildings intended for children. Our guiding principle when building new kindergartens is the thoughtful design of spaces that correspond to children's needs and interests.



The Italian pedagogue Loris Malaguzzi went so far as to speak of space as "the third educator". Spaces leave impressions on us and influence our well-being and mood: they can be unappealing or inviting, inhibiting or stimulating, restricting or liberating.

Children want to discover and explore, move and experiment, but they also want to withdraw and rest. To that end, we create spaces that also help them find their way in the adult world. Our aspiration is always to take children's needs and daily pedagogical requirements as the starting point for our planning.

The construction of publicly funded kindergartens usually occurs under the shadow of a push towards efficiency and pure functionality. Our new kindergartens, which we built in 2019 together with local authorities and investors, show how we nevertheless live up to our aspiration of creating outstanding educational spaces for children through sophisticated and aesthetically ambitious projects.



19 centres opened



176 jobs* created

* full-time positions



1,331 childcare places created





FRÖBEL-Kindergarten Villa Pavenstedt in Bremen
The fitted and free-standing furnishings in the homely children's library on the top floor offer lots of space for browsing. The

traditional fireplace was transformed into an electric one and the soundproofing panels installed on the ceiling improve the acoustics of the old building.



FRÖBEL-Kindergarten Zuckerhut in Cologne
The main feature of the childcare centre is a 140 m², open-plan room structure with an island-like playscape for children of all

age groups. With their various uses, the structural features enable the room to be divided up into clearly demarcated zones.



FRÖBEL-Kindergarten FlipFlopz in Berlin

The different levels of the spacious play and adventure pool invite children to discover, explore and test their own abilities. Different

materials and surfaces mark out different areas within the space and make its architectural language tangible for the children.



Mayersche Lochfabrik – acrylic tube

On the upper floor, the children can crawl to lofty heights through an acrylic tube. A custom-made piece created in close consultation with

the local authorities, the tube's construction was a test of courage – and it remains one for the children who use it. To be sure, this project was a unique, worthwhile experience for all parties involved!



Open pedagogy and architecture

The FRÖBEL- Kindergarten Flügelnuss opened in Bonn in autumn 2019. For the design of the rooms, FRÖBEL worked with Dung Ullrich Architects to develop a concept that places the open pedagogical concept in a dynamic dialogue with the architecture. The basis for this approach is a collaborative research project on teaching methods by the Technical University of Cologne and the Bremen University of Applied Sciences.

What stands out about the design of this kindergarten is that the furniture consists almost entirely of modular shelving systems that can be assembled, disassembled and converted as

required. These include stackable stools, clip-on elements and honeycomb panels that are used as easels, room dividers or building blocks to create play and activity environments.

The children can arrange the space themselves according to their own desires and interests, and the educators have the ability to adapt the space to suit their pedagogical aims or needs. It will be exciting to see the impact the model project has on pedagogical work and on the children themselves. The project will be evaluated with the Technical University of Cologne in 2020.





**Pedagogy and
quality development**

How digital media are changing everyday life in our centres

Nurseries, kindergartens and after-school care centres are places where innovative forms of digitalisation can be tested and established in various areas. When implemented well, digitalisation can offer great opportunities for making beneficial changes to daily routines, managing administrative tasks quickly and efficiently, and modernising childcare centres in general.

In 2019, we asked ourselves: What can digital media, digital tools and their applications achieve in childcare centres? Following on from the last few years, three strands emerged whose positive impact on the childcare centre setting we consider to be particularly beneficial.

Our priorities in equal measure are the children in our care, their families and our early childhood professionals. That said, we aim to integrate digital media into the educational process in concrete ways, such as using an endoscope camera to discover the natural world.

Digital media with children in the daily routine



Digital documentation of educational processes



Online professional development and training



We also intend to map the children's development online with photos and videos. Families can access and even participate in this digital documentation with just a few taps on their smartphone.

Another area of opportunity is professional development and training. Online processes (e-learning) offer flexible and individually tailored options.

Generating enthusiasm

In 2017, the Digital Media in Early Childhood Practice FRÖBEL Lab project was the proving ground for stimuli for ideas on how digital media can be used effectively in everyday pedagogical work. Such stimuli included getting to know each other, group discussion and trying things out. In this innovative way, early childhood professionals from different regions were able to acquire skills for handling and using digital media. Since then, digital media have found their way into FRÖBEL kindergartens and after-school care centres.

How can digital media find their way into educational practice?

In the last two years, we have placed particular emphasis on being receptive to innovations, becoming creative, and developing additional practical ideas with children and colleagues. These days, digital media are a matter of course, but they have also become an enormous gain for the daily routines in many centres: from the digital food menu and bilingual picture book cinema to digital scavenger hunts and the children's own robots. Other centres that want to enrich and reinforce their daily routines with digital media can and should learn from these ideas and experiences, as well as from the rejected ones, the pitfalls and the uncertainties.



Moreover, the experts in the Digital Media in Early Childhood Practice project at FRÖBEL Lab are developing an individual dissemination plan with which they will pass on their knowledge and experience to colleagues. The primary objective is to generate enthusiasm for the subject of digital media among even more education professionals. The experts are developing their own concept for this, which can be easily adapted to the different centres' focus areas and individual strengths. Here too, the possibilities are manifold – from internships and workshops to Skype consultations and working groups.

Learning from and inspiring one another

The first concepts and ideas for the dissemination of digital media were already tested last year – including Medien AG in Berlin, which was founded by three FRÖBEL kindergartens (Freudenberg, Im Grünen and Kleine Füße-Naseweis). The centre managers and media education professionals meet at regular intervals to exchange ideas on the possible uses of digital media.

The FRÖBEL-Kindergarten Winterstrasse has also set itself the goal of bolstering interaction between colleagues via digital media. As part of the event series FRÖBEL Educates!, the centre manager, Marco Radsziwill, gave a presentation on the opportunities and limitations of digital media in childcare centres.



The Kita 4.0 project

The ESF project entitled “Kita 4.0 – Qualifying Education Professionals as Experts in the Safe Handling of Digital Processes in the Early Childhood Education Working Environment” was launched in 2019 at FRÖBEL with a lot of initial buzz. Over the next three years, we will use it to test new digital options for modern educational documentation.

Specifically, the training courses deal with the digital documentation of educational processes, interactions with parents via an app, and the applicable data protection regulations. When the software is introduced, the centre teams are carefully guided throughout the process, and given the training and technical equipment they need. The project aims to ensure that the education professionals are able to deal with digitalisation competently and safely, and can use digital tools in their work.

A total of ten FRÖBEL facilities from Saxony and Berlin are participating in the pilot project. At the start of November 2019, centre management, senior management and early childhood consultants set

out their expectations for digital educational documentation, exchanged experiences and planned the next steps for the project.

Further training of digitally literate professionals

At each of the centres where the project is being carried out, there will be a mentor trained in digital documentation. In the future, they will be able to use their knowledge to provide support to their colleagues in kindergartens. During their first qualification round in November 2019, they tested the software and wrote their first digital learning stories. This has raised a good deal of anticipation and excitement for the upcoming test phase in the centres.

The vision of digitally documenting educational work

Over the course of the project, FRÖBEL formulated its vision for the digital documentation of educational work and, on this basis, continues to observe the rapidly developing market of software providers. According to this vision, children will be able to document their learning activities and experiences together with the education professionals by means of written contributions, images, and video and sound recordings. Parents will have access to their child's profile and be able

to follow his or her development and experiences. The app is intended to make educational work more transparent overall and facilitate the dialogue within the team and with families.

First of all, the project aims to provide experience in creating digital portfolios and learning stories. In the end, this form of documentation is expected to provide a more complete and vivid picture of the children's development. The professionals will also have a better overview of the individual documents.

Effective parent communication

A further advantage of digital educational documentation is that it can be shared directly with parents via an app. They can also contribute through comments or upload content themselves. This exchange is very valuable for the professionals and can promote a better understanding and appreciation of their educational work on the part of the parents.



Kick-off conference in Leipzig in 2019

“We are very excited about the software. We hope that it will save us time, give us more space for creativity and be fun to use. I'm looking forward to the upcoming changes.” **Beatrice Schmitt**, Centre Manager

The Kita 4.0 project is funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the European Social Fund (ESF) as part of the rückenwind+ (“tailwind+”) programme.

rückenwind+



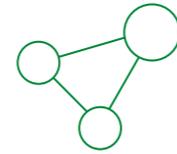
Europäische Union



Zusammen.  Zukunft. Gestalten.



FRÖBEL research and university network



Since 2018, FRÖBEL has been building up a research and university network with the aim of closely linking academia and real-life practice in the field of early childhood education.

The network brings scientists and early education professionals into contact with each other in order to stimulate and intensify the exchange between theory and practice. In the context of research projects and internships, for example, this is achieved through specialist lectures and practical seminars at universities, and through the joint development of research subjects.

Focus on research projects

There are currently 18 cooperation projects with a **focus on:**

- ▶ Music & art
- ▶ Mind-set & qualification of education professionals
- ▶ International comparison of early childhood education
- ▶ Child development
- ▶ Social participation
- ▶ Digital media
- ▶ Language

Hamburg University of Music and Theatre

International Elementary Music Practice cooperation project:

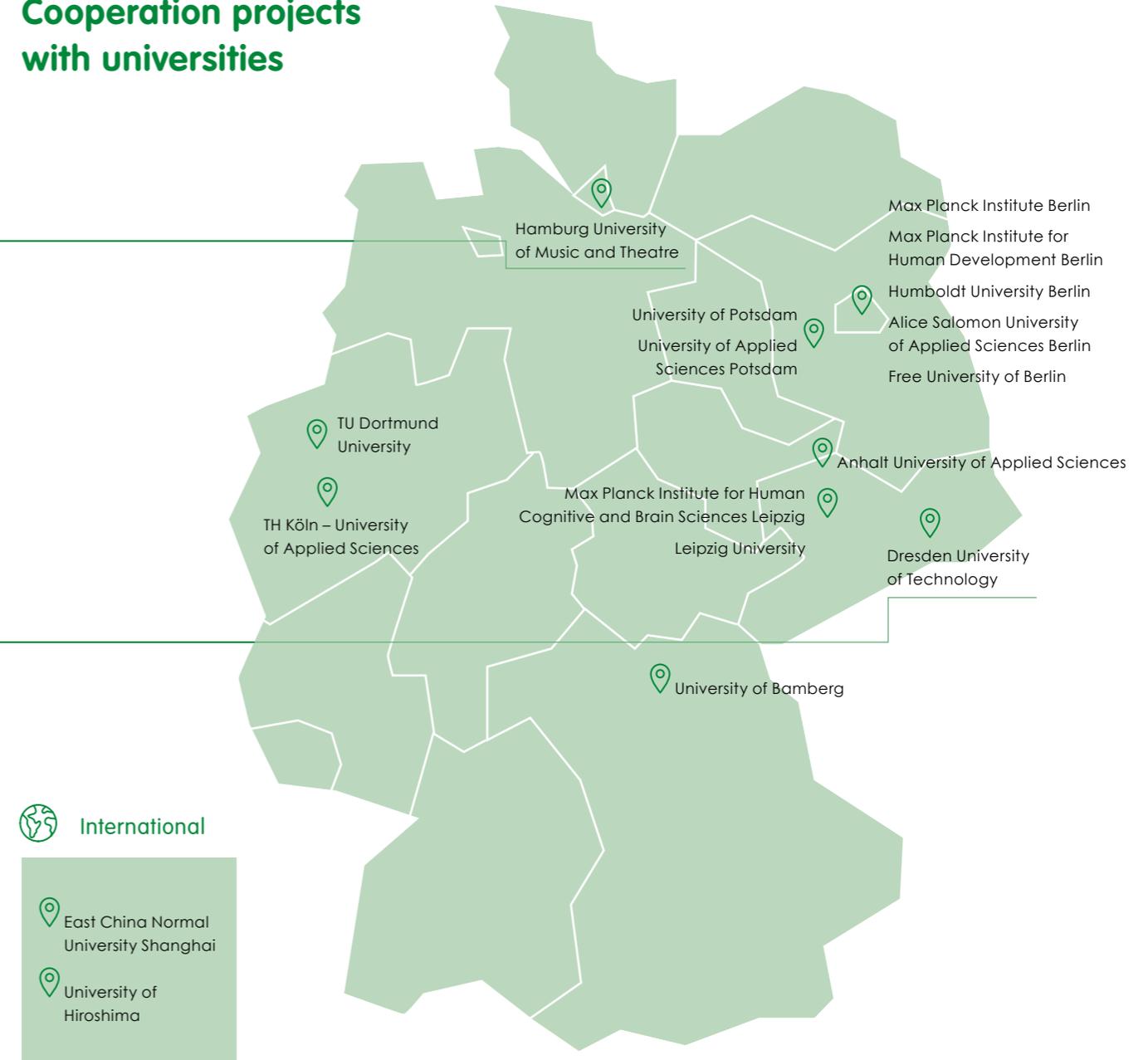
One-year music education programme for immigrants from non-EU countries who have a degree in music or music education. Participants work in tandem with one education professional from six FRÖBEL kindergartens.

Dresden University of Technology

Collaborative research project with the Faculty of Education Science: "Recording and assessing the practical exam performance of students in social-pedagogical training programmes"

The aim of this research project is to optimise the evaluation of the hands-on work of future early childhood educators during their internships. Two FRÖBEL kindergartens from Leipzig participated.

Cooperation projects with universities



Language promotes participation

Fostering language development is one of the fundamental duties of all childcare centres. For over ten years, FRÖBEL has been committed to promoting children's language and reading development in its kindergartens. Just one of many examples of this commitment is the participation of nearly all FRÖBEL centres in the annual National Read Aloud Day.

National Read Aloud Day brings parents, grandparents, former FRÖBEL staff, volunteers, employees from partner companies and many others to our nurseries, kindergartens and after-school care centres. However, at FRÖBEL, we don't only read aloud one day a year. We have an active network of volunteer readers who regularly visit kindergartens and after-school care centres to read with children.

We support our educators with training and networking opportunities. Fifty-five FRÖBEL centres take part in the "Early-years Language Learning: Because Language is the Key to the World" project and have an additional language development support professional present daily. For us, fostering

language and literacy skills is an educational mission. It is an integral part of everyday life in a childcare centre, and contributes to the successful development of children's linguistic and communication skills. To that end, our education professionals act as linguistic role models in daily life. They initiate conversations, ask follow-up questions, think along with the children, listen to them, and verbalise their concerns and interests.

Appreciation for all languages

All families should be fostering language and reading development. In many families, especially in urban areas, the main language spoken at home is not German. Language and reading resources that take only German into consideration fall short in these cases. Parents who are not fluent in German will rarely pick a German-language book to read with their children.

Some FRÖBEL centres already have children's libraries that have been established independently or with the parents' help. These libraries provide a great variety of books for initiating lively discussions on many topics and serve as inspiration for special reading hours, reading afternoons or entire reading weeks.

These successful and effective examples show how an easily accessible and diverse range of books not only enriches daily routines in kindergartens, but also supports the regular, daily language development work of our professionals in the long term.

German government sponsors "Early-years Language Learning: Because Language is the Key to the World" programme

This federal programme is supporting 55 FRÖBEL centres with an increased need for language development assistance by providing them with an additional qualified language education professional. The task of this professional is to boost the linguistic interaction level of the entire centre through a variety of measures. The main aim is to foster a linguistically stimulating daily routine at the kindergartens and a rigorous cooperation with families. The professionals are also on hand to provide the entire team with guidance and support in their area of specialisation.

Impact objective: to support children's language development from their first years of life

The additional language education professionals

- ▶ provide the team with knowledge and ideas for **fostering language development within daily routines**
- ▶ offer guidance on the (linguistic) **role model function** of education professionals
- ▶ keep parents informed about the linguistic development of their children
- ▶ are responsible for sourcing books and materials on **cultural diversity**

55 centres in the "Early-years language learning" programme



62 language education professionals



Multilingual children's books in all kindergartens



Impact for the team*

"We have more in-depth and more frequent conversations with the children."

"The children are asked more thought-provoking and 'why?' questions. In all groups time is taken for children to state observations they've made about books and for dialogic reading. There is much more conversation between educators and children now than before."

"We are taking more advantage of situations in the daily routine to talk: when changing nappies, entering or leaving the centre, playing games and during various change-over periods."

"We are using tablets, kamishibai boards, interactive walls, books, etc.."

"I'm seeing the team communicate with the children in a more mindful, sensitive manner."

One-on-one time and small group discussions are integrated into daily routines.

"The daily routine is organised in such a way that it is regularly possible to work in small groups or one on one."

"We make the most of different situations, for example during change-over periods, in the cloakroom or washroom, or during games, meals or outdoor time."

* Survey of 11 FRÖBEL "Sprach-Kitas", or language-focused childcare centres.

Impact for the children**

100%

the children recount experiences from their day-to-day life at the centre.

75%

Interest in books has grown.

75%

Interest in linguistic units has grown.

** Parent survey



Child protection – a matter of course

Many people are responsible for child protection at FRÖBEL. Full-time child protection specialists and child protection officers at FRÖBEL centres in all regions work alongside FRÖBEL educators trained in a specialist career programme to ensure that children can exercise their right to non-violent care.



All forms of violence impede children's development and in some cases can be seriously damaging to them. Thanks to the thorough, practice-oriented qualification and close mentoring of our education professionals, we are able to discuss this issue with families in a frank manner that engenders trust. In the words of Astrid Lindgren: **“How can there be peace in the world if there are no peaceful people? Peace needs to begin in our own homes.”**

We tell all children, in a straightforward and age-appropriate fashion, that nobody – whether it is another child or an adult – has the right to hurt them in any way. Every day we see living proof of the effectiveness of the structures, processes and conversations surrounding child protection: if we respond early, we can convince parents to correct their child-rearing habits.

With a supportive rather than an accusatory approach, education professionals can gain parents' trust and help them recognise the power they have in their own family. At the same time, children benefit from feeling heard and getting help. Their self-confidence grows, which allows them to talk about things, even difficult subjects. And education professionals learn that they can have an impact on children's family situations when they act in a responsible way.

“Child protection is a team effort”

Esther Francke is the centre manager of FRÖBEL-Kindergarten Sonnenschein after-school care centre in Potsdam. She also works with other centres as the regional child protection officer in western Brandenburg. In an interview with Katrin Hentze, a child protection consultant at FRÖBEL, Francke talks about child protection as a team responsibility and how interacting mindfully with children can have a positive impact on protecting children.



Katrin Hentze: How do you as a manager sensitise your team to this subject?

Esther Francke: I have to do a good job introducing it; that way it isn't too heavy and they can see the connection between their practical experience and the theory. One very helpful thing has been receiving the wonderful monthly reminders from the 2017 campaign on children's right to a non-violent childhood – we use these to anchor the subject in the team's memory. We discuss any child protection cases we have here at our team meetings. Not in an in-depth way, but we repeat the procedures. We also use the “5 Minutes for Child Protection” format developed at FRÖBEL, which helps take away the fear of bringing up and discussing the topic. It gets colleagues to loosen up and tackle the topic with fewer prejudices. We are all better listeners when we are less afraid of something.

Katrin Hentze: So ideally the team can be sensitised through practical experiences, and analysing and reflecting on concrete cases. Do you have the impression that they're open to the topic and willing to take it on as a duty? Or is there resistance?

Esther Francke: There is absolutely no question about the fact that we have the duty to protect children. And we go through the same procedures time and again. But it isn't about what's challenging for the team in that case. I find out more about that in the individual case meetings. There I can see where the team stands and what it

needs, what they've understood and also what each individual needs. In other words, the real-life examples and case meetings boost their self-awareness and self-perception even more.

Katrin Hentze: So what I'm hearing is that you regularly discuss and take time for the subject of child protection. Have there been changes in the way the team deals with the subject or the way the members are sensitised towards it?

Esther Francke: Yes, their approach has certainly changed: they take children's statements, even challenging ones, seriously; they feel prepared to deal with these situations now. There are some colleagues who come to me faster. And we did a team training course on Systemic Aggression Management. That also made a big impact on my colleagues in terms of child protection.

Katrin Hentze: Well it sounds to me like it really worked. That the team is just as well-equipped to deal with this topic as other pedagogical issues. Child protection isn't an exceptional or anxiety-provoking subject. It's just part of our job; we possess a certain level of competence and know what we need to do.

Esther Francke: That's exactly right! There is an increasing feeling of competence.

Katrin Hentze: Speaking of that, it's a good moment to talk about the children. We'd be interested in knowing how you teach them that they have the right to grow up in a non-violent atmosphere.

Esther Francke: We incorporate it into our everyday routine in many ways. A great deal happens in the area of participation – we have an active "children's council". And during our after-school care centre meetings we discuss many things, such as being mindful with one another, and the topic comes up time and again. How do we deal with violent situations among children? How do we deal with situations when we overstep our boundaries?

Katrin Hentze: Yes, exactly. What do you do then?

Esther Francke: Recently I said something to a child in a way that wasn't right and it escalated into a loud argument. I later went to the child and said: "Hey, I'm sorry about that. I wasn't well informed." I explained the situation again and got her to listen to my perspective, too. I think it made an impact on her. Now, that isn't exactly an example of child protection, but it does show a certain attitude that exemplifies it. If being mindful with one another works for adults, it can work with children, too. It makes sense.

Katrin Hentze: What about children's rights?

Esther Francke: Of course we talk about children's rights. The children know about them from school as well since it's a subject taught at the beginning of every school year. Sometimes they use it as a protective shield and to provoke us. Now we tell them: yes, you're right. Those are children's rights and human rights. And we are all human. And that's why we should try to work on achieving them together. In other words, what you expect from

others is also expected of you. That way we can coexist peacefully. That's a topic we also need to work on with children.

Katrin Hentze: Let's focus again for a moment on the right to a non-violent upbringing. How is it for children when they tell you about such situations at your centre?

Esther Francke: Children tend to open up during activities with educators, say, while doing pottery or sewing – in relaxed situations when they are spending time together. Children are cautious about the subject at first and then talk about it with increasing self-assurance. In one case, a child told his parents he was going to tell his educators about the situation at home. Making such a statement,

demonstrating that sort of self-confidence – those are huge signs of trust. They are showing that they know where they can go for help. That impressed me.

Katrin Hentze: That is really a strong statement. You are sending the child the message that it is completely okay to talk about it. You aren't shocked. You're showing the child that you're on the ball and telling them about the process. How do you build that kind of trust?

Esther Francke: By giving children the time and space they need to talk about it. By listening to them. It's creates a good foundation when children know: even if it's hard for me to talk about, I can bring it up here.



The power of participation

Kerstin Hilker is one of the first educators who qualified for a specialist career in child protection. As a member of the team at FRÖBEL Kindergarten Siemens Technopark, she is strongly committed to child protection. She raises awareness of the subject in the team and creates opportunities for children to participate and voice their opinions – including complaints. Katrin Hentze spoke to Kerstin Hilker about what a children's parliament can achieve.



Katrin Hentze: How did the children's parliament come into being?

Kerstin Hilker: We had the theoretical foundations for it in a team training course. Then we drafted an actual constitution that suited our children, their parents and the team. A constitution which we believe best preserves the children's dignity, and which we all signed. Then we thought about the practical details like how, when, where and with whom the parliament should meet.

Katrin Hentze: How are the parliamentarians elected and how does parliament meet?

Kerstin Hilker: They're elected at morning circle time. Some of the children openly cast their votes, placing marbles on photos if they felt like it. The pre-schoolers did it by secret ballot in a polling booth. The children's parliament meets every other Tuesday in the staff room while morning circle time is going on. By meeting in that room we are saying: something important is happening here – something special. The parliamentarians sit on adult chairs around the big table, while our centre manager runs the meeting. That is also a clear message to the children that they are being heard.

Katrin Hentze: What do the children talk about?

Kerstin Hilker: They touch on different subjects. Some popular ones are food choices, field trips or play materials. They also voice their desires or criticisms.

Katrin Hentze: What sort of effect does the parliament have on the children?

Kerstin Hilker: It really boosts their self-confidence. One shy two-year-old parliamentarian returned to morning circle time for the first time like a whole other person – he marched in so upright and self-confident with his folder. He was very proud to have been there.

Katrin Hentze: How is it documented?

Kerstin Hilker: We write or draw everything on posters that we hang up in the lobby so all the children and their families can see what we've done. I often see parents standing in front of it with their children, asking them: What did you guys talk about? And I see how proud the children are. Proud to be at such a great kindergarten.

Katrin Hentze: Are there also boundaries as to what can and can't be discussed?

Kerstin Hilker: We established that in the constitution. If it has anything to do with children's health, it's up to the educators. We also involved the parents here. Several had expressed the concern that the children would be allowed to do whatever they want now. But that is certainly not the case.

Katrin Hentze: What impressed or surprised you the most?

Kerstin Hilker: Before the second parliamentary session I asked the children: Would you like us educators to do something differently? They just

stared at me blankly. And then I realised children really don't understand that adults are capable of doing anything wrong. Which gives us a certain power. And a huge amount of responsibility. I think it will be different with the four and five-year olds – hopefully they'll criticise us at some point!



TraumRaum: Bolstering children's rights through interior design

In a pilot project involving 15 FRÖBEL kindergartens in Hürth, Kerpen, Essen, Mühlheim and Düsseldorf, a guide with practical modules for creating sustainable, child-friendly interior design was made in cooperation with JAS e.V., a non-profit youth architecture association based in Essen.

Often, it is adults who decide how to design and furnish rooms for children. Thanks to the TraumRaum (literally 'dream room') project, the children at FRÖBEL-Kindergarten SieKids Energiezwerge had the chance to design the space of their dreams alongside adults. By actively participating in the project, the children were able to see their direct influence on their environment.

"A dark, light, cosy, colourful and warm cave that has grass, trees and flowers and a place for hiding, climbing, crawling, observing and cuddling!"
(Cem, 6)

TraumRaum works!

- ▶ Improves children's **social skills!**
- ▶ Children experienced **self-efficacy!**
- ▶ Strengthens centre **solidarity** through a sense of team work
- ▶ **Increases** children's **participation!**
- ▶ Raises education professionals' **awareness for the children's needs and ideas!**

Reichweite:

1,075 children,
300 education
professionals

15 field trips

Activities:

4 workshops with
5 to 15 children each

Exhibitions at FRÖBEL-
Kindergarten
Quellenpark and
FRÖBEL-Kindergarten
SieKids Energiezwerge

Our conclusion

The TraumRaum project reinforced and strengthened children's rights and the importance of participation and self-determination in the daily routines at our kindergartens. The children felt appreciated, got to be active participants in a task usually reserved for adults, and learned how to use different tools and materials. The topic of interior design also facilitated the creative integration of various pedagogical fields, including maths, spatial thinking, literacy, nature and the environment, building and construction, natural phenomena, and the use of media.



"TraumRaum has been inspiring! All the centres are taking up the children's ideas to plan other interior design projects and the repository of methods is being used well. Thanks to the documentation and exhibitions on the project, parents, municipalities, public offices, schools and organisations can learn how to practically apply children's rights in an exemplary fashion."

Normann Stricker, FRÖBEL Regional Manager of Westphalia-Lippe



**Human Resource
development**



Opening up paths for development

We at FRÖBEL have long since recognised that a systematic human resource development programme can have an impact on staff retention. In addition to our professional development and training programmes, our employees enjoy various options for further developing their professional skills, including specialist and management careers.

In human resource development, just as in pedagogical work, we let ourselves be guided by the strengths and potential each employee brings to the table. Rather than looking exclusively at the abilities and skills required for a certain position and selecting the personnel based on those criteria, in future we want to shift our staff development focus towards thinking of our employees as experts – as the ones who have the ability to inspire and get other people interested in their topics.

Human resource development should therefore work with the visions and wishes of individuals, and help them utilise these visions in their own professional life. Among other things, it means professionally and methodically bolstering our employees abilities, but also putting them in a position to bring others along with them on this path. Our internal specialist networks in particular have proven quite fruitful in this regard and are a structure we want to continue to strengthen.

The fact that our work is generally understood as being meaningful is a big advantage. But that alone is not enough to convince our employees to keep their job and stay with our organisation. Given that childcare is a demanding profession with stress factors such as higher child-to-staff ratios or conflicts, we need to provide our employees with solid structures and long-term options so they can see and feel the impact of their work.

More than just learning languages

At FRÖBEL centres, bilingual education is integrated into daily life, representing a cultural change in the way that languages are learned in an institutional context, i.e. in kindergartens or schools.

To put it simply, bilingual education at FRÖBEL nurseries, kindergartens and after-school care centres means the pedagogical organisation of the daily routine in two languages. An immersive concept makes it possible for us to implement the EU recommendation from 2003 that every citizen should have the opportunity to learn foreign languages on a functionally appropriate level from an early age.

The goal is for children to come into contact with foreign languages and experience everyday activities in them: this sort of immersion is a huge change from the way many of our education professionals once learned foreign languages or, in some cases, the way foreign languages are still taught at schools.

Bilingual education is a team effort

Immersive learning is characterised by understanding concepts based on context and finding peace with uncertainty – i.e. developing what is known as ambiguity tolerance, an important intercultural communication skill. Our immersive bilingual education concept relies on the cooperation of the entire team. And since every individual brings their own (family) cultural background to the team, the task of fostering good intercultural communication skills starts with them. How does that look in practice? The team has to structure the daily routine in such a way that each of the languages have their own special time and place. This is an area where coordination among team members is particularly important.

“Rituals help. As do non-verbal communication, songs, games, morning circle time, looking at English picture books, creative activities, and field trips.” (Manager of FRÖBEL-Kindergarten An St. Peter)

In general it is up to the team to work together to find a way to communicate effectively. Having knowledge about bilingual education, language development and intercultural communication makes this work significantly easier.

“Of course it is exhausting at times, but it is also a big advantage! When you see children dealing with the foreign, the unknown, you realise that language doesn't matter – that communication is so much more than language, skin colour, and different appearances.” (Manager of FRÖBEL-Kindergarten An St. Peter)

Education professionals usually speak German among one another, but they always speak their respective foreign language with the children. Feedback on the efficacy of context-based language learning provides valuable information for implementing an early childhood bilingual education programme.

The impact on the children and the team

► **Children develop language-learning strategies**
For educators who learned foreign languages in a very different manner, the power of immersive language learning becomes palpable. Even if children need translations at first, it quickly gives way to amazement among educators that children can understand things simply based on the context: “Wow, they really get you!”

“It's easier for children once they get to school. It's like they have a knot that unfurls in their mind once they get to school – their knowledge just comes out automatically. One of our families moved to Florida and the parents have told us that their children have no problems whatsoever with the language.” (Manager of FRÖBEL-Kindergarten An St. Peter)

► **Ambiguity tolerance is reinforced**
It is not necessary to understand every single word in order to communicate in a foreign language. Children learn to wait and gather information from the context, and rely on gestures and facial expressions.

► **Language learning is a fun activity**
Children see that a language they do not understand immediately can be fun. They may not know the meaning of the words of the picture book that is being read aloud to them, but laughter is universal.

“Children understand a foreign language even though they can't respond yet; it is a piece of normality and a gain.” (Manager of FRÖBEL-Kindergarten An St. Peter)

162 foreign-language specialist and auxiliary early childhood professionals



76 bilingual centres



Languages: English, Spanish, Italian, Polish, Dutch



The Kita-Fachtexte project moves forward

Roughly 85,000 people visited the website www.Kita-Fachtexte.de in 2019 – around 20,000 more than in the previous year. And visitors clicked ‘download’ approximately 58,000 times – which is great news for the authors of the 165 early childhood education papers that the site has published since 2011.

Since autumn 2019, Kita-Fachtexte.de has continued as a collaborative venture of FRÖBEL e.V. and Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences (ASH Berlin).

The papers published on Kita-Fachtexte.de are aimed at students and trainees in early childhood education training programmes as well as professionals in the field. The papers are designed for self-study or as inspiration for work at nurseries or kindergartens.

Up to ten new papers will be published in 2020, covering subjects such as inclusive education and childcare, the Pikler approach to early childhood education and experiential learning. The cooperation advisory board of FRÖBEL and ASH Berlin selects the topics and papers based on demand and the state of current research.

Rahel Dreyer, professor of early childhood education and developmental psychology at ASH Berlin, provides academic supervision to the authors.

That makes Kita-Fachtexte.de the only German-language website to provide free, publicly accessible, expert-reviewed publications on early childhood education.

In 2019, Kita-Fachtexte.de got a fresh new look. Many improvements were made, including usability: users can now perform a full-text search of the papers or search for papers by topic or author on both mobile phones and computers. Interested parties can also subscribe to receive notifications about new papers.

And perhaps most special of all: since 2019, selected papers have been translated into English and can be found at www.ece-in-germany.info. By launching this English-language site, FRÖBEL and ASH Berlin are responding to the increasing international interest in German early childhood education. Assoc Professor Iris Duhn – from Monash University, Australia, where she teaches early childhood education – was chosen to review the English-language papers.

-  www.kita-fachtexte.de
-  www.ece-in-germany.info



A spotlight on our professionals

Every year, around 300 new colleagues start working at FRÖBEL – the majority of them at our kindergartens. At the same time, there are also employees who leave the organisation, creating gaps that need to be filled quickly.

For years, FRÖBEL has been structuring, digitising and creating campaigns to recruit professionals – a major task for our organisation. We make it a point in our campaigns to communicate the individual profiles and strengths of each of our centres. The effectiveness of those efforts can always be determined immediately – depending on how quickly we can fill new or vacant positions.

FRÖBEL thus focuses on its target group – education professionals – and communicates a clear employer brand in all its HR marketing measures. Educators with professional experience and career ambition look for jobs with different features than entry-level employees or career changers.

Since education professionals are among the occupational groups most interested in further education and training – a fact that has been confirmed in our internal questionnaires – and since one of our basic values is our belief that education is not only for children, all of our positions offer prospective employees the opportunity to build on their professional knowledge. Three-quarters of the new employees at FRÖBEL agree or strongly agree that regular professional training is important to them.

276 new employees



29 career events in 10 cities



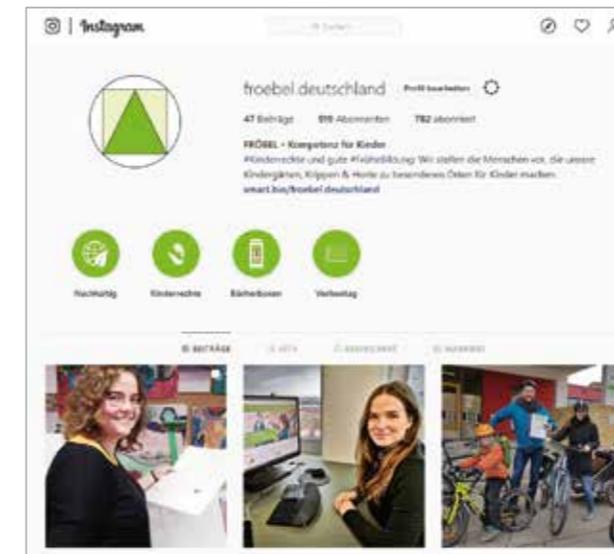
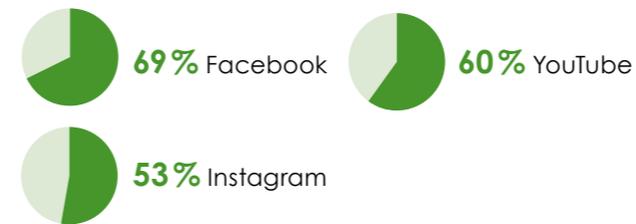
Digital application process, from the job advert to the online application



Recruiting via social media

Since 2019, professionals have had the option to apply for a job at FRÖBEL with a video rather than a written application. Even though the majority of jobseekers do not submit this sort of application, it is FRÖBEL's response to the strong trend of job recruiting via social media and adopting formats commonly used there in its own recruitment process.

Social media use*



FRÖBEL has also been on Instagram since October 2019.

Facebook

www.facebook.com/FROEBELkarriere

Instagram

www.instagram.com/froebel.deutschland

YouTube

www.youtube.com/channel/UCnDvHQUgdw5wDFghHpvaO3g

Twitter

<https://twitter.com/FROEBELeV>

LinkedIn

<https://de.linkedin.com/company/froebel-bildung-und-erziehung>

Xing

www.xing.com/company/froebel





FRÖBEL for families

Language as a bridge

The seven employees of FRÖBEL's family counselling programme CLARA offer counselling in German, English, Spanish, Farsi and – unique in Berlin – Vietnamese to approximately 500 families every year.



Counselling families in many languages:
(left to right): Natalie Samimi, Ralf Cebulla, Hong Hanh Nguyen

Since September 2018, Hanh Nguyen has been counselling families and parents in her native tongue. Through her own networking in the Vietnamese community in Berlin, she established her counselling service on the market in no time at all and it is increasingly in demand. Based on data from the Association of Vietnamese in Berlin, the city is home to around 26,000 people with Vietnamese roots.

Ms Nguyen, your office is the only one in Berlin to offer counselling to families in Vietnamese. Is there just not much demand or why is that?

The demand is definitely there. But to Vietnamese families, the concept of getting help from someone else is very foreign. They usually deal with problems on their own. In Vietnam only people with a lot of money can afford counselling. There is no such thing as freely accessible counselling. In that sense, the concept feels foreign to many Vietnamese. That is probably the reason for the relatively low demand. In addition, many of the Vietnamese people in Berlin live fairly reclusive lives. And yet the community has existed for over 30 years. Back in the GDR era many families resettled from Vietnam to East Berlin.

What is your work like? How do you reach people?

When I started the service in February 2018, families from other institutions were sent to us to help them with their problems. At the same time, I got in touch with all the kindergartens and schools in the neighbourhood, told them about our services and gave them my contact information. I also made contacts beyond our district and inquired at other counselling centres. In particular, the contact to institutions of the Vietnamese community has solidified over time.

What are the concrete tasks of your job?

Since I was born in Vietnam, I can start up a conversation with people in Vietnamese very easily, which builds trust. I hold lectures and offer counselling to families. Many single mothers take advantage of my service. At the beginning, I was only giving counselling sessions in rooms at the Association of the Vietnamese in Berlin. Now, in addition to that, around 40 families come to our counselling centre, usually with school-related, parenting or bureaucratic issues.

How do you collaborate with the neighbouring FRÖBEL kindergarten?

The collaboration has existed from the start. The staff there were the first ones to introduce the Vietnamese families to our services. And we have regular contact with one another on a professional level. Understanding what is happening in the daily routines at the kindergartens helps me in my work,

because it allows me to give the teams more insights into Vietnamese culture and family life. I offer my services to all other FRÖBEL kindergartens as well. Because I firmly believe that when we understand one another it is the best way to achieve integration and thus create decent opportunities for all children.

FRÖBEL Family Counselling CLARA

Fürstenwalder Str. 25
10243 Berlin-Friedrichshain
🌐 www.ffb-clara.froebel.info

FRÖBEL Family Counselling CON-RAT

Hans-Schmidt-Straße 14
12489 Berlin-Adlershof
🌐 www.conrat.froebel.info

FRÖBEL Family Support Services and Counselling

Senftenberg
Hörlitzer Straße 34
01968 Senftenberg
🌐 www.efb-senftenberg.froebel.info

Family support services and counselling provide parenting support throughout Germany, in line with section 28 of the SGB VIII (German Social Code) and in conjunction with sections 16, 17, 18 and 41. In Berlin these services are financed by the Senate Department for Education, Youth and Family and the provider's own funds. Free, low-threshold and confidential family support services and counselling are offered to all families in Berlin and throughout Germany for help with parenting issues, family problems, and children's developmental and behavioural concerns, especially in the case of separation and divorce and in arranging visitation rights.



FRÖBEL International

FRÖBEL welcomes the world

The high-quality educational work at our centres is attracting more and more attention from early childhood and management professionals as well as investors and childcare providers from all over the world. Our visitors are most interested in learning about the basic conditions for childcare services in Germany, the FRÖBEL educational mission statement, the versatility of our conceptual focus areas and, naturally, what everyday life at our kindergartens is like.

FRÖBEL sees the growing international interest in its work as an opportunity to take a step back and reflect anew on our own educational programme. The increasing demand to take part in our visitor and training programme is not only an encouraging acknowledgement of our professionals' pedagogical work – it also emphasises the special characteristics and unique selling points of our education and care services.

In addition to offering insights into our early childhood education practices, we give pedagogical lectures on specific educational topics to every visiting group. The topics include the basic conditions of early childhood education in Germany; the FRÖBEL educational mission statement; architecture and interior design; and quality management and development.

We make our creative approaches to educational topics – such as language development, workplace health or interior design concepts – transparent and tangible for our international visitors, which in turn inspires and drives forward educational developments in their home countries.

 www.froebel-gruppe.de/international



Visitor and training programme 2019

223 participants from **eight countries** in 2019



Nearly twice the number of participants in the visitor and training programme



More than one-third of the participants took part more than once



▲ An Iraqi delegation visiting a FRÖBEL kindergarten in Leipzig.

◀ The Chinese educational organisation Le Beier visited FRÖBEL for the second time, this time with 80 participants.

Early childhood teacher training programmes

A special training programme for early childhood educators was launched in Bangkok on 17 May 2019.

Project partners FRÖBEL, Nanmeebooks and B.Grimm celebrated the start of the programme with the German ambassador Georg Schmidt and Thai early childhood education experts.

And since then there has been a training programme in Thailand that is modelled after the methods and practices of German early childhood education. The first modules it included were “play-based learning” and “inquiry-based learning”; modules on observation and documentation, family collaborations and interior design were added later to make the concept comprehensive.

Positive feedback

Thanks to their positive experience, programme participants have felt encouraged to develop their own ideas and are increasingly incorporating them into their daily work routines. In a pleasant working atmosphere, they saw that, in contrast to their previous experiences, it is possible to convey knowledge in a relaxed and playful manner, and that the attitude or role adopted by education professionals is very important in this process.

“We are proud to be able to bring our educational expertise in education and care to Thailand, alongside our established partners. We are thus working towards the best possible education and care of children here as well,” explain Petra Wenig-Wefers, a FRÖBEL early childhood education consultant, and Tina Breternitz, a staff and professional development specialist at FRÖBEL, who trained the first group of trainers in Thailand.

The project was preceded by a feasibility study for the Thai market, funded by the DEG (German Investment Corporation). FRÖBEL International GmbH worked in close cooperation with Ernst Klett Präsenzlernen GmbH and Thai publisher Nanmeebooks on the study. Nanmeebooks is active in the Thai education sector, having already demonstrated its commitment to education by establishing a Little Scientists programme (of the German foundation *Haus der kleinen Forscher*) in Thailand.



Petra Wenig-Wefers and Tina Breternitz during on-site training



Workshop group in Bangkok

Serdecznie witamy – Bem vindo!

In March 2019, Adriana Ślusarska, the manager of FRÖBEL's MALTA kindergarten in Poznań, Poland, welcomed two interns from the Marienhaus School in Meppen, Germany. As part of the transnational exchange, the final internship for the soon-to-be educators turned into a truly special experience.

“Erasmus+: The world comes together at kindergartens – Educator training with a European profile” is a collaborative project between the Marienhaus School in Meppen, a state-approved vocational secondary school with a professional training programme in Germany, and FRÖBEL's MALTA kindergarten in Poland.

“I was most impressed by the bilingual education concept and I hope to get involved in this area in future. Furthermore, I thought the children's self-reliance and above all their autonomy were really

brilliant. They have many opportunities to participate in the daily routine at their kindergarten,” reported Christina Gövert after her ten-week internship. Ever since then the centre has been involved in transnational projects such as with the German Business Council (*Deutscher Wirtschaftskreis*).

The goal is to expose children to a variety of professional fields. In one instance, a Polish lawyer visited the kindergarten and explained her job; in another, a representative from a company in the paper industry did arts and crafts with the children and explained why sustainability is so important.

 www.froebel-polska.pl



Christina Gövert



Johanna Bekel and Jeannett Fischer
(FRÖBEL Early Childhood Consultant)

Guest educators from Rio de Janeiro

International exchanges take place in both directions at FRÖBEL. Two education professionals from the kindergarten of the German School in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, spent one week visiting FRÖBEL kindergartens in Berlin.

They accompanied the daily routines at the kindergartens and observed the real-life implementation of the bilingual language concept as well as the play-oriented and hands-on practices for fostering language development.

The guest educators were warmly welcomed at FRÖBEL-Kindergarten Lützelsteiner Weg and FRÖBEL-Kindergarten Im Grünen. The educators were particularly interested in second language acquisition, and learning about the best ways to promote and evaluate it. A continuation of the exchange with the German kindergarten in Rio has been planned.



Exchange with Christine Schneyer (second from left) and Alison Mannion-Ghanbari (right)



Kindergarten down under

FRÖBEL employees are not limited to educational trips financed by Erasmus+: they also have the opportunity to work overseas for longer periods. We offer work stays for several months at FRÖBEL centres in Australia or our neighbouring country Poland. So far, we are the only provider of early childhood education and care services to offer such a programme. Despite support from FRÖBEL, it took nearly a year to make all the necessary visa arrangements, perform language tests and get the German qualifications recognised. But the time finally came in the autumn of 2019: two FRÖBEL employees flew to Australia for half a year.

Both colleagues worked as bilingual education professionals at the Australian centres, where they were welcomed by two committed intercultural teams, many parents and families, and children who were just as joyful as the ones at their kindergartens in Germany.



isa Stemmler, who lives in Cologne, has been in Melbourne since November 2019.

“Halfway through my stay here I can confidently say that it has been hugely enriching for me to see what educational work is like in another country and culture. I will be able to bring many new and important ideas and practices back home with me. There is a much stronger focus on natural science in the daily routine here. They do great projects, many of which produce eureka moments and give the children plenty of opportunities to feel, mix, splash and knead.

I will definitely be taking some of the ideas back with me to Germany. The freedom that the children have here paired with the variety and quality of the inquiry-based learning activities that the education professionals do with the children every day is truly impressive.” **Lisa Stemmler**

www.froebel-gruppe.de/ab-ins-ausland

FRÖBEL meets ERASMUS

The EU programme Erasmus+ has been providing funding for exchanges between education and care services in other European countries since 2018. At FRÖBEL we take full advantage of this offer in order to carry out longer collaborative projects for professionals at our centres in Germany or Poland.

The 2019 projects are a good start, encouraging FRÖBEL colleagues to network and learn from other colleagues. At the same time, FRÖBEL also offers professionals from foreign countries the opportunity to come and take a look inside our centres.

Exchanges made possible by Erasmus+ benefit not only the programme participants but also the kindergartens involved: the experience breathes life into abstract concepts such as multilingualism and cultural diversity. Furthermore, our visitors get to see the real-life implementation of our early childhood education model and return home filled with inspiration and new ideas for their work.

What happens when we “look past the end of our nose”?

We experience **cultural diversity**



We feel **inspired**



We learn to **tolerate otherness**



FRÖBEL goes abroad

FRÖBEL-Kindergarten Im Grünen in Stockholm

A team of **15 colleagues** spent four days visiting kindergartens in **Stockholm, Sweden**.

Focus area: Nature education/Forest kindergarten

“The energy and enthusiasm for nature education was very inspiring for us. The warmth of the educators there was really contagious. A number of bright spots and visions emerged as a result of this trip. We are going to implement them into our daily routine in many variations and formally add them to our centre’s conceptual framework.”

Lisa Scheck, Centre Manager

FRÖBEL-Kindergarten Krähenest in Cologne

Exchange with **Malaga, Spain: 13 children, each accompanied by one parent, and their educators travelled to Spain on three occasions.**

In return, Spanish educators visited the kindergarten in Cologne.

Focus area: Bilingualism/Cultural exchange

“The exchange with the Maristas kindergarten in Malaga was meant to strengthen, on a practical level, the bilingual reality we share with one another every day at our centre. The children got to see what a Spanish kindergarten was like. They mastered the daily routine in a foreign language with flying colours.” **Jan Mehrländer**, Centre Manager



Visiting FRÖBEL

Visitors from Austria

Childcare provider KIWI “Kinder in Wien” (or “Children in Vienna”) has **on two occasions** sent **13 educators** to visit kindergartens in Berlin for five days each time.

“We found the open group work and approach to bilingual education especially interesting. After doing this intercultural exchange, we want to reflect on and further develop our own educational practices. Our children, teams and the KIWI association itself will surely benefit from the pedagogical ideas that we are bringing back to Vienna.” **Marianne Prenner**, KINDER IN WIEN

Additional support from native speakers

Every year since 2016, **a number of English-speaking German Studies students from Limerick, Ireland** have completed their mandatory internship at our bilingual kindergartens in North Rhine-Westphalia, Hamburg and Braunschweig. The students spend a semester providing support to the teams at our centres in their native tongue – adding a lot of cultural value for both sides!

“The students benefit from our experience in bilingual and intercultural education – which they have gained through consultations, practical coaching and regional bilingual working groups.”

Alison Mannion-Ghanbari, consultant for staff development and intercultural affairs



Visiting educators from KiWi in Vienna

“A whole lot of noise!”

It has been ten years since FRÖBEL started operating kindergartens with a bilingual educational profile and outstanding pedagogical quality in Australia. This year our 133 colleagues down under celebrated their tenth anniversary – and we wish them all the best! FROEBEL Australia's founding in 2010 marked the beginning of an exciting and wonderful adventure that demanded a lot of creativity, enthusiasm and patience from everyone involved. Olde Lorenzen, Managing Director of FROEBEL Australia Ltd., has been on board since the very beginning.



Olde Lorenzen,
Managing Director of
FROEBEL Australia Ltd.



Today FRÖBEL has a total of four Australian locations in Sydney and Melbourne. What is special about these centres?

Our extraordinary, deeply committed educators, our European-style educational profile and undoubtedly also our bilingual educational concept, which is something very special in Australia. Our focus on unique design and architecture is also increasingly becoming one of our trademarks. It emphasises our courage to challenge the status quo and try new things.

In your opinion, what has FRÖBEL's involvement in Australia done for FRÖBEL in Germany?

I believe that the international exchange has positively influenced the work of FRÖBEL in Germany, especially in the debate surrounding quality. What most likely stands out most from the German perspective is the legally stipulated educator-to-children ratio, which is not only very generous but must be adhered to at all times. That

also means we aren't so familiar with frequent staff absences due to illness or professional training, which unfortunately often affects the daily routine at our German FRÖBEL centres. However, it does have a price: in Sydney and Melbourne it is common to pay fees of up to 165 Australian dollars – over 100 euros – per day, with very limited government subsidies available. Which understandably drives the parents' expectations up substantially.

What are you particularly proud of?

Of the fact that we were able to establish ourselves in the first place. Only later on did we truly become aware of how high the stakes were back then. One of the keys to our success at the beginning was probably a certain modesty. We had nothing – and a lot of it. And now FRÖBEL stands for a very definite and special educational profile. And given the fact that we are still relatively small, we have managed to make quite a lot of noise!

And with the founding of the “Little Scientists” in 2013 you even added a second company, correct?

Yes, we are particularly proud of the success of the “Little Scientists” programme, the Australian subsidiary of the German “Haus der kleinen Forscher”. One of FROEBEL Australia's major highlights in its ten years of existence was when we gained the Australian government as a funding partner – crowned by the fact that the Prime Minister himself announced the partnership. Since its inception, we have reached close to 188,000 children with our Little Scientists programme.



Above: New addition 2018: FROEBEL Early Learning Centre Parkville.
Below: Little Scientists with big ideas: natural sciences are integrated into the daily routine.

www.froebel.com.au
facebook.com/froebelaustralia

FROEBEL Australia

16 TO 125 EMPLOYEES
from 2009 to 2019

454 CHILDREN enrolled today
54 CHILDREN when starting in 2009

5.26 TONNES
of apples for children over 10 years

LITTLE SCIENTISTS
158,460 CHILDREN REACHED
5,560 EDUCATORS TRAINED

1,525 CHILDREN enrolled at FROEBEL over 10 years

10 YEARS FROEBEL AUSTRALIA

2 July 2018: Opening of Professor Lynn Corcoran Early Learning Centre: FROEBEL Parkville in Melbourne; launch of FROEBEL Future Leaders Program

8 February 2016: Australian Government announces funding for national rollout of Little Scientists program from 1 July 2016.

21 December 2015: Opening of the FROEBEL St Leonards Early Learning Centre in Sydney; FROEBEL North Sydney families move to new centre

13 October 2014: Opening of the first Early Learning Centre in Melbourne: FROEBEL Fitzroy North, on the campus of Deutsche Schule Melbourne

1837: Friedrich Fröbel, renowned German educator, opens the world's first kindergarten in Germany.

22 May 1990: FROEBEL Australia's parent organisation FROEBEL e.V. is founded in Berlin

21 May 2009: FROEBEL Australia is founded and starts operating two Early Learning Centres in New South Wales: Alexandria & North Sydney

1 May 2013: Launch of early STEM professional development program 'Little Scientists Australia' at the Australian Technology Park in Sydney

181 COMMUNITY EVENTS over 10 years

67.31% DIPLOMA OR HIGHER EDUCATOR QUALIFICATIONS (50% required under regulations)

615 HOURS of German language immersion every week

47 FAMILIES in 2009 > **406** FAMILIES in 2019



News from the Little Scientists

Yet another year has passed! Our organisation has grown steadily and become better known since its founding in 2013. And that shows, for instance, when we introduce ourselves at educational events. Every year the whole Australian early childhood education sector meets at the **ECA National Conference**. We were there for a fourth time with our own booth.

It became especially clear this year that the interest in early childhood STEM education is growing. At our first two conferences, we needed to explain exactly who we were and what STEM education was all about.

By last year we had already gained a lot of recognition, and this year a number of participants came to us to discuss their latest projects and introduce their colleagues. It feels great to see how popular and respected our Little Scientists programme has become.

International networking

Little Scientists Australia is part of a very active international STEM community. Every two years, international representatives from the research and education sector, economics and politics gather in Berlin to share their experiences in the field of STEM education and education for sustainable development.

The conference is jointly organised by the Haus der kleinen Forscher (Little Scientists' House) foundation and the Siemens foundation. At this year's conference, our main focus was on how STEM education can inspire children to be actively involved in a sustainable society.

Little Scientist conference (from left to right): Prof. Hans Bacher, Sibylle Seidler, Prof. Lisa Harvey-Smith, Justine Clarke, Olde Lorenzen



An added bonus is that STEM colleagues from all over the world come to visit us in far-flung Australia. In 2019, we welcomed colleagues from Germany, Thailand and Taiwan, and got to share a little piece of our everyday life as Little Scientists with them.

“Sonic Boom” in Sydney

Every two years we organise our own conference designed especially for education professionals who are either already familiar with Little Scientists or looking for an introduction to STEM education. “Sonic Boom” in August 2019 in Sydney was a huge success.

We hosted many special guests, among them Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith, Australia's first Women in STEM Ambassador, as well as Justine Clarke, a very popular children's singer who focused on the topic of acoustics in her presentation.

New business partnerships

In May 2019, Dyson took over the sponsorship of the Air module of the STEM professional development and training programme for a year to start with. Over the course of this partnership, we will be inviting a Dyson engineer to eight workshops in various Australian states.

Participants will gain insights into the thought processes and approaches of engineers in their attempts to solve technical problems in everyday life; they will also find out what air is made of and how harmful substances can be removed from it.

What have we accomplished since 2013?

Reached close to **188,000** children throughout Australia



6,587 education professionals participated in workshops



Reached **1,685** kindergartens from all Australian states



160+ certified “Little Scientists` Houses”



42 local network partners



STEM professional development and training programme with 10 modules: Water, Air, Engineering, Mathematics, Optics, Human Body, Computer Science, Chemical Reactions, Acoustics, Design and Technologies



Since Australia is such a vast territory, it is often especially difficult for education professionals in rural areas to take part in high-quality professional development and training programmes. For that reason, we will be offering workshops directly at kindergartens in two rural regions over the next three years. Set to begin in February 2020, this project, supported by the Toyota Community Foundation, will be academically supervised by the team at Charles Sturt University led by Dr Amy MacDonald.

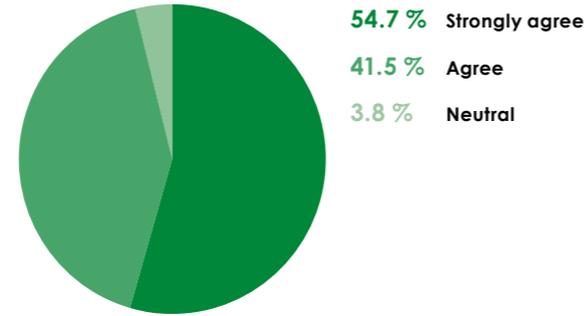
Little Scientists earns a quality seal

In 2019, the Little Scientists programme was officially designated as a high-quality professional development and training programme both by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs) and the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) in Canberra. Since then it has been possible for educators to receive official accreditation for their participation in our professional development and training programmes.

Proven impact!

Furthermore, an external evaluation, published by the Australian Government in January 2020, covering all the projects funded by the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) since 2016 produced similarly outstanding results for Little Scientists and expressly confirmed that the programme is worth funding.

The educators' positive attitude towards STEM subjects*



“There were a number of cases in which the programme participants were very sceptical at first, but who by the end of the programme felt more confident and competent with regard to STEM education after the programme was over.”

Effective Early Childhood STEM Education: Findings from the Little Scientists Evaluation. 2019, Charles Sturt University.



The next steps

The messages we are getting from Canberra make us quite optimistic and give us hope that the Australian Government will renew our funding. We expect a decision in early May 2020 when the annual budget for 2020–21 is announced. It is still unclear what effects this past summer's wildfires will end up having on the budget and whether smaller programmes have been jeopardised due to the huge amount of resources having been redirected to deal with the consequences of the fires.

But we won't let this precarious situation stop us from enjoying our work! We are currently preparing our second Little Scientists Early STEM Award with great optimism. Every two years we invite all Australian kindergartens to submit their projects from all STEM areas to our competition. The 2020 motto is "Quirky Curious Futures" and we are looking forward to seeing how our children imagine their future!

www.littlescientists.org.au

FRÖBEL sets out on the path ... towards more sustainability.

Everybody is talking about climate change and its consequences – for good reason. It is becoming increasingly important to confront these topics and reflect upon one's own actions and behaviour. That applies to FRÖBEL, too.

We are being asked more and more what we are doing to promote sustainability: How do we deal with the different facets of sustainability on a pedagogical level? How do we feel about campaigns such as Fridays for Future? How do we respond to the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

As one of the largest providers of early childhood education and care operating throughout Germany, we have the ability and the imperative to closely examine all of our organisational areas and think about where we can make an impact both in the short and long term.

We have already taken the first big steps on the path towards sustainable management. We negotiated a climate-neutral purchase of energy for all of our centres: by the end of 2021, we will buy and consume electricity exclusively from renewable energy sources. In order to promote more sustainable mobility, we have updated our rules for business trips and work-related mobility: we will take the train for business trips and only fly in exceptional cases; and we will equip our offices with electric cargo bikes in order to reduce the number of shorter car trips.

We are also prioritising the acquisition of furniture, materials and consumables made from natural materials over ones made from plastic. We plan on looking closely at all organisational areas – from our administrative offices to the kindergartens themselves – in the long term.

As a provider of education and care services, we also have the deeply important responsibility of integrating the idea of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into the daily kindergarten routine and anchoring it in our educational concept.

Our goal is to understand the consequences of our own actions in the world and make responsible choices. Therefore, we want to jointly address questions such as the following with our centres:

- ▶ How can children learn to take on responsibility for themselves and their environment?
- ▶ What relationships to nature, the origin of our foods and the mindful handling of those two things can we establish among children at an early age?
- ▶ How can we sensitise families to these issues and help involve them in our efforts to achieve more sustainability?
- ▶ What possibilities do we have to make daily life at kindergartens more environmentally friendly and sustainable?
- ▶ What options do we have to build and furnish our centres in a sustainable fashion?

There is no clear answer to most of these questions, which we will be focusing on intensely in the coming years. The future belongs to our children. All of us can and must do our bit today to ensure that our world is still a place worth living in for the generations to come.

Stefan Spieker

Chairman of the Board, FRÖBEL e. V.



Contact

FRÖBEL e. V.

Head Office
Alexanderstr. 9,
10178 Berlin
Telephone: +49 30 21235-0
Email: info@froebel-gruppe.de

FRÖBEL Bildung und Erziehung gemeinnützige GmbH

Head Office
Alexanderstr. 9,
10178 Berlin
Telephone: +49 30 21235-0

Managing Directors:

Stefan Spieker, Dr. Gudrun Rannacher
Email: info@froebel-gruppe.de

Office for International Affairs

Dörte Bieler, Martin Böhme, Yasemin Serbest,
Christine Schneyer, Theresia Wollnitz;
Telephone: +49 30 21235-301
Email: international@froebel-gruppe.de

FROEBEL Australia Limited

Managing Director: Olde Lorenzen
FROEBEL Australia Limited Suite 501,
105 Pitt Street Sydney NSW 2000,
Australia;
Phone: +61 (2) 80800065
Email: info@froebel.com.au

FROEBEL Polska Sp. z o.o.

Managing Director: Kamil Więcek,
ul. Brzeska 7,
61-048 Poznań,
Poland
Phone: +48 660 359-545
Email: malta@froebel-polska.pl

Imprint

Editor:

FRÖBEL e. V.
V.i.S.d.P. Stefan Spieker
(Chairman of the Board)
Haus des Lehrers
Alexanderstraße 9, 10178 Berlin

Editorial staff: Beate Timmer, Johanna Meinikat
Illustrations, layout: Karla Detlefsen

About this report:

It is not always easy to measure social impact. Guided by the impact study by Phineo, we focused in this report on projects and processes to the best of our ability. The instruments we used to assess the potential impact were primarily (non-representative) surveys of employees, children, families and collaborative partners from different fields; interviews; and photo and video material. **The Editorial Board**

Editorial deadline: March 2020
© FRÖBEL e. V. 2020

Photo credits

Boris Breuer:
Cover, p. 29, 33, 38, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 51, 57, 61, 63
Ulrike Fackert:
p. 39
Tetiana Matsypura:
p. 13, 68, 82, 94, 97, 100
Bettina Straub:
p. 11, 13, 15, 31, 34, 35, 42, 70, 73
Alice Vogel:
p. 20, 103
Franziska Werner:
Cover, p. 6, 15, 16, 17, 29, 36, 49, 53, 58, 59, 78

Unless otherwise noted, the photos used in this report are from FRÖBEL centres.



**We are looking
forward to 2020!**

www.froebel-gruppe.de