

# WELCOME



School year 2023/2024

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## Meet the team



Henrik  
Owner and founder



Rikke  
Director



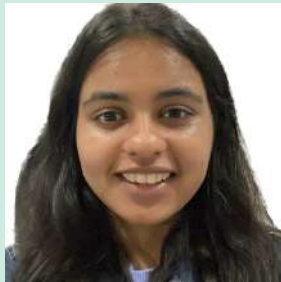
Milda  
Branch Manager,  
Charlottenlund



Auguste  
Head teacher  
Zebras



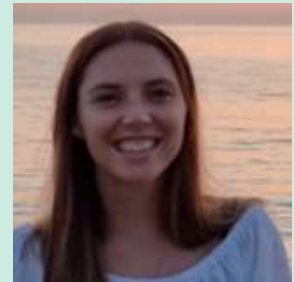
Lorenzo  
Teacher in Zebras and  
music teacher for  
Giraffes and Zebras



Sana  
Teacher assistant  
The Zebras



Fani  
Head teacher  
The Giraffes



Hannah  
Teacher  
The Giraffes



Ana  
Teacher (part time)  
The Giraffes



Giuliano  
Teacher assistant in the  
Giraffes and gym  
teacher for the Giraffes  
and Zebras



Marta  
Head teacher  
The Pandas. On  
maternity leave. Back on  
the 8th of January 2024.



Kalliopi  
Head teacher  
The Pandas. Covering  
for Marta. Last day  
covering for Marta 5th  
of January 2024

## Meet the team



Marina  
Teacher  
The Pandas. (working part time (half days) from 7/8-1/3-24 due to studies)



Lucia  
Teacher  
The Pandas.



Eleni  
Teacher assistant  
The Pandas.



Malwina  
Substitute teacher  
covering fixed hours in  
the Giraffes



Malena  
Substitute teacher  
covering fixed hours in  
the Pandas/giraffes



Laura  
Substitute teacher  
covering fixed hours in  
the Pandas/giraffes



Athanasia  
Substitute teacher



Isidora  
Substitute teacher

### Onboarding

When there is a change in the team, we always prepare and make a plan. The new staff is introduced properly to our policies, program, and values and receives all relevant information needed to become a productive member of the team. The teachers are always welcoming new team members and very quickly they become part of our Stepping Stones family.



Marinella  
Substitute teacher

### Team member leaving

Parents may feel that saying goodbye to a teacher is worse than the children themselves experience. Children have many interactions with various teachers throughout the day including the teachers from the other classrooms.

This means that routines and the familiar environment do not disappear for the child, even if a teacher leaves or a new person enters the room. Nevertheless, too much replacement is never good, neither for children nor for adults.

Children need to feel comfortable creating good relationships, and the day must be recognizable. All of this is very important to us and something we always have in mind.

## Welcome

Dear families,

Welcome to Stepping Stones Preschool, school year 2023-2024. We are looking forward to a year filled with challenges and excitement and we cannot wait to see the children grow and learn together as a group.

We wish to have a happy classroom with enthusiastic, excited, and inquisitive children who are eager to come to school and feel that the school is a safe and fun place to be. Moreover, we want them to learn about respect and love for themselves, each other, and the environment.

To support your child's learning, please make sure that you:

- Arrive at school each day on time.
- Read our weekly/monthly newsletters.
- Bring appropriate clothing for all kinds of weather so your child does not miss out on fun outdoor activities.
- Inform us if your child will be out of school or late.

## Communication

We use ClassDojo as our communication platform, primarily to share pictures and updates from the classrooms. You can use ClassDojo to communicate with us, however, if you wish to send a message through ClassDojo, please be aware that we are working with the kids and we do not check the app regularly during the day, so please just send informative messages there. We will try to read them during the day but we will most of the time not answer them. If you need a reply to your message, please use the email and if its urgent, call the school's phone.

**School Phone: 23 69 0032.** Please call, **no texting.** We don't reply to text messages.

Email: giraffes@steppingstones.dk, zebras@steppingstones.dk, pandas@steppingstones.dk

Office phone: 23 69 5000. Please call, **no texting.** We don't reply to text messages.

Office email: info@steppingstones.dk.

If your child is sick or taking a day off, please send an email or ClassDojo message.

## **Vision for parent-school engagement at Stepping Stones Preschool**

School/parent cooperation is based on mutual trust.

Parental engagement recognizes the important role that both parents and teachers play in developing positive attitudes towards learning and education for children, building their motivation and confidence as learners, and fostering their enjoyment of learning.

The school meets the parents with the understanding that the parents do their best and are interested in their child's development and their daily life at school. Therefore, they must have the necessary information about their child and the class and the school in general. What is even more important - the parents should hear about the good things that succeed at school, and through that, strengthen their trust in the school. The role distribution is clarified based on the fact that the parents know best about their child and that the school knows best about the daily life at Stepping Stones, how, why and who teaches at the school. This clarification is important in cooperation. To succeed in this relationship, you parents must feel safe about bringing your children to our school. Stepping Stones meets all parents with respect and equality and we are aware that parents should be treated individually, ensuring an equal dialogue. We expect that parents have an influence and actively participate in voluntary assignments at school and come to events and meetings. If the communication with a parent for different reasons becomes complicated, the director comes in, both to support the employee and parents and ultimately, the student. The school is evident in the requirements for the parents but at the same time responsive.

## **Parent-Teacher Meetings**

When a child has been at Stepping Stones for approximately 3 months, the teachers will offer a follow-up meeting to talk about the child's adaptation to the classroom.

Every year, beginning of September, we have a big parent teacher meeting where all parents are invited. We are also offering yearly parent-teacher conferences by the end of the school year. We use these meetings to talk about your child's development throughout the year.

Before leaving the preschool you will receive your child's assessment (printed and/or in a digital format).

## **Parents committee**

We have a parents committee at the school, consisting of 5 members: 3 full-time and 2 substitutes. The parents' committee brings suggestions for the school and helps organize events. They also organize social events for the families, outside of school, and they help to facilitate communication between the parents and the school. The parent's committee and the school meet approximately 3 times a year. Every new school year, new parents get an opportunity to sign up for the committee and if we have more than 5 interested we will have a vote.

## School policies

### Friendships



Stepping Stones Preschool is committed to providing an environment for children that is welcoming and safe.

We value friendships as they are vital for children and they nurture their social-emotional learning skills and growth.

We encourage the children to play with each other and play with children they don't normally play with.

We do not accept children being left out or called names.

Excluding another child from a game, making fun of another child. Pushing, scratching, kicking, hitting, biting etc.

We recognise that legitimate play behaviour may include many of these facets, but when one or more parties becomes targeted on a frequent and recurrent basis the experience of those affected can be negative. In the rare cases where hurtful behaviour is defined as bullying and despite all efforts to prevent it, we will respond to all incidents thoroughly and sensitively and we will inform the parents of all children involved in the alleged bullying incidents at the earliest opportunity.

## Food

We wish to contribute to the children's healthy eating habits. That is why we have a NO sugar policy. Through a healthy and balanced diet, they will grow into strong, healthy and happy children who are eager to learn and play. To create a good learning environment and eating atmosphere during lunchtime, we will encourage children to try out new dishes and ingredients. Children are curious by nature and often get the urge to taste the food their friends are enjoying.

### **Morning fruit and afternoon snack.**

For the morning, please pack fruit/vegetables for your child. It can be a banana/apple/orange, some berries, or different vegetables. Please do not pack smoothies or juice, it's not necessary to have that at school. We wish to only have fresh fruit or vegetables for the morning snack. For the afternoon you can pack a bigger snack such as a sandwich.

There are many healthy snack options that you can pack for your child. Please talk to the teachers if you would like some suggestions.

Healthy nutrition leads to healthy learning!

**Due to allergies, we have a NO nut policy (including peanut butter) and due to choking hazards, we ask you to cut grapes and cherry tomatoes in half. The shape and size of grape and the cherry tomatoes means they are easily lodged in children's airways and are difficult to remove with recommended first aid manoeuvres.**

## Birthdays

We love celebrating birthdays! The children are welcome to bring a healthy treat (without sugar) to their birthday party. Most children really love fruits! Every birthday is special and here at the school we make the celebration special with a lot of attention and singing for the birthday kid <3

Many families also have a private birthday party for their children. It's private and the school is not part of the planning but we do recommend that if you decide to have a party and invite children from the school, please don't leave some children out, if they are in the same classroom. This way we avoid children being sad and feeling left out.

### End of the year party

Every June/July, children are leaving to start a new adventure. Every year we have a big party where we celebrate the end of the school year and the children leaving. The children leaving in this period (June/July) can sign up and bring a treat to share at the party. At this party the children leaving, will also receive their portfolios.



## **Drop-off and Pick-up**

### **Drop-off time from 7.30-9.15 (Pandas from 7.30-9.00)**

Please respect the time. Your child benefits from having a free play before we start circle time at 9.30 (Pandas 9.20)

Some children need some extra attention from the teacher(s) which is easier to give when they are dropped off before circle time starts. When we have circle time, we have to stop the activity to help the child adjust. It interrupts the other children, who might lose their concentration or they might get upset because they see another parent. Furthermore, the child who is being dropped off late often has a hard time settling in that day as they arrive later than their peers and missed out on the first important part of the day.

We also ask parents to make their stay at the school as short as possible. We are a school, with many children and dedicated teachers who are always there to help children settle-in in the morning. If you need to speak to a teacher, we advise that you give us a short message in the morning or send us a message via ClassDojo. If it's required, we will set up a time for a proper meeting, where we can talk privately.

### **Pick-up time.**

You are welcome to pick up your child early. However, if you wish to pick up before 14.00, please talk to the teachers, so we can prepare your child, as we might be having an activity.

### **Pickup by an unknown person**

Please make sure to sign the "Pick-up" form if your child is being picked up by an unknown person to the staff (You can get a form by asking your child's teacher). If someone new is picking up your child, always tell the staff in advance. We need to meet the person together with you for the first time. If that is not possible, we will ask you to send us their ID.

Please respect the teacher's time and collect your child on time.

Thank you!

## Sickness

We follow the guidelines from the Danish Health Authority.

If your child becomes ill while at preschool, we will call and ask you to collect your child.

The following sickness policies will be strictly enforced, for the health, well-being and safety of all concerned. Examples of symptoms that suggest your child should not be in school include but are not limited to:

- Fever. The child needs to be fever free for 1 full day before coming to school.
- Diarrhea or vomiting. The child needs to be free of diarrhea or vomiting for 48 hours. If we call you from school, your child cannot come the 2 following days (This is also from the health authorities guidelines but also experience, as we have experienced many times, unfortunately, children coming back too soon and vomiting at school, usually uncontrollably and spreading the virus furthermore!)
- Sore throat, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing, constant runny nose with colored discharge.
- Runny and/or crusty eyes: watery, matted, and/or red/pink eyes. Symptoms gone or doctor's note.
- Unexplained Rash. Symptoms gone or doctor's note.
- Diseases, for example chicken pox, roseola, conjunctivitis, mumps, streptococcus, COVID-19, etc.

Parents of a child with a diagnosed contagious illness are asked to notify preschool as soon as possible so that we may alert parents to watch for symptoms in their children.

Please also be aware that some childhood diseases can be unsafe for pregnant women in their first trimester.

**The definition of a well-child is: A child that is not reliant on paracetamol, is well enough to participate in all pre-school activities (including outdoor play), has a normal appetite, is happy and sociable, does not require a greater staff ratio and has normal bowel function.**

## Medication

If your child is on prescribed medication and it needs to be taken while he/she is at preschool, the medicine must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, name of the medication, dosage, and when to be taken. If medication is to be taken only twice a day, i.e. (morning & night) then it will need to be done at home. **If your child refuses to take medication from their teacher, we will not force them to take it, but we will contact you to inform you of their refusal.**

**Note: We will not use eye drops.** If your child needs eye drops, you (parents) will do it before drop off and after pick up. If they need it in between, we will ask you to come and give the drops.

Please make sure all medicine is handed to the teacher for safe storage.

## Guidelines for the use of digital learning resources and telephones

We have a clear policy on what we offer the children in terms of technology and media.

We want to support and help create a reasonable balance - both physically and mentally in our school program.

Specifically, this means that the children do not use different devices here at school. We have one tablet per classroom which is only used by the staff and primarily for uploading pictures to ClassDojo and playing music for playing, relaxing, tidying up, etc.

Occasionally the tablets are used in an educational context, where it supports the given activity. It can be a video or pictures that relate to the theme the children are working on.

When used wisely, technology and media can support learning and relationships. Enjoyable and engaging shared experiences that optimize the potential for children's learning and development can support children's relationships both with adults and their peers.

Special days: 1-2 times a year, preferably in December, and at the end of the school year, we have a pajama day only for the older children (3-6) where we watch a short film and enjoy some popcorn and juice.

We recognize that children are presented with an attractive world when they sit in front of a screen. However, with our program, which is packed with educational fun activities, we are not worried about the use of tablets in the school.

The teachers have a telephone available so that it is possible to contact the teachers and for teachers to contact parents.

Additionally, the teachers do not use their personal phones for private use.

We recommend that parents keep their phones in their bags/pockets when dropping off or picking up so that they use their resources and attention on their children and their most important meeting of the day.

## Sleeping / Naptime

This policy only applies to the age group 1-3 years old. **Our 3-5 years old do not nap in the school.**

Our 1-3 years old sleep approximately from 11.30-14.00

Sleep is very important in this age group and it is a natural process. Some children fall asleep a little earlier, some sleep later, a little less or a little more. We do not force children to sleep; they fall asleep by themselves, and some might need a teacher to sit next to them to feel comfortable until they fall asleep.

We do not wake the children up earlier from their naps. The children wake up by themselves.

Occasionally, parents ask us to prevent their child from taking a nap or shorten it, as they are afraid it will ruin the night's sleep. But the opposite is often the case – the daily nap is often a condition for the child to sleep well at night. If the child does not get the daily nap, he or she becomes increasingly tired during the afternoon, and when the child has to go to bed in the evening, he/she is overtired, and then it's even harder to fall asleep. When a child is awakened after 1 hour, it will typically be in the middle of a deep sleep, which usually causes the child to be irritable for the rest of the day.

## Outdoor

We are outside every day, all year around. Snow, rain, wind and sunshine, we enjoy it all!

We have a lot of free play outside as we believe that children benefit a lot from free independent play. Moreover, we also have fun planned activities where we research the nature surrounding us. Being outdoor also improves motor skills, muscle strength, overall health, and peer-to-peer relationships. It gives an appreciation for the environment and boosts creativity, imagination and independent learning.

The children also go on field trips throughout the school year. They practice walking in line, walking to the park and other outdoor adventures. When they are used to walking and good at following instructions, they will also go on bigger field trips, usually related to their monthly themes.

## MUDDY Play

The joys of mud! Children are drawn to mud puddles and dirt is a part of their play. Mixing soil, water, and other natural materials like pebbles, leaves, or grass provides children with endless possibilities for learning and fun. Here at the school the children have a lot of outdoor fun and they really enjoy playing with mud and mixing everything they find, into delicious potions.

**It's essential that the children are dressed appropriately so that they can truly immerse themselves in the play as much or as little as they want.**

1. Always have appropriate outdoor clothing, according to the season and weather
2. Always bring appropriate clothing (no Fancy clothes, that can't get dirty)
3. Always have extra clothes on your child's spot, so they can change into dry clothes.

## Sun Policy

Our sun policy applies from April to September.

Please apply sunscreen on your child before bringing him/her to school. We will apply sunscreen again after lunch.

**Please bring a sun hat for your child and sunscreen.**

From midday – 2 pm we will be inside or in the shades.

Water is always available for the children and we remind them to drink plenty of water during the day.

## Pandas schedule/yearly plan Monday - Friday 2023/2024

7.30 - 8.30 Morning club, all groups together

8.30 - 9.00 Free play in the classroom or on the playground

9.20 - 9.40 Circle time

9.40 - 10.10 Fruit snack

10.10 - 10.50 Activity (Music, Art, Body movement, exploration, Science & Nature)

10.50 - 11.20 Lunch

11.30 - 13.45 Nap time

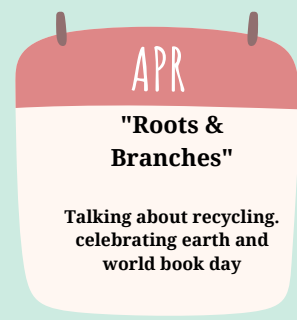
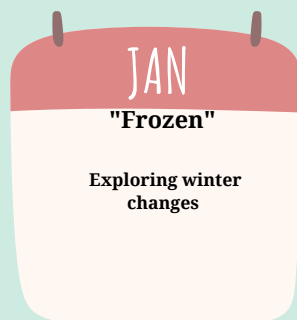
14.00 - 14.15 Snack

14.15 - 15.20 Free play

15.30-17.20 After school club, all groups together

## Themes

The monthly themes are implemented in everyday conversations, activities and play.



## Giraffes & Zebras schedule/yearly plan 2023/2024

7.30 - 8.30 Morning club, all groups together

8.30 - 9.30 Free play in the classroom or on the playground

9.30 - 10.00 Circle time

10.00 - 10.30 Fruit snack

10.30 - 11.30 Activity (Music, Cooking, Art, Gym, Science & Nature, academics)

11.30 - 12.00 Lunch

12.00 - 13.30 Relaxing time, story time and free play.

13.30 - 14.00 Afternoon snack

14.00 - 15.20 Outdoor play

15.30-17.20 After school club, all groups together

## Themes

The monthly themes are implemented in everyday conversations, activities and play.

**SEP**

**"All about me"**

Exploring our identity (Things I like, what I look like, my name)  
Classroom Routines and Fire Safety

**OCT**

**"Changes"**

Observing the seasonal changes around us.  
Celebrating Autumn and Halloween.

**NOV**

**"Finding your voice"**

Learning and recognising big emotions and advocating ourselves.  
Celebrating Thanksgiving and friendship

**DEC**

**"Hygge"**

Winter and Christmas

**JAN**

**"Frozen"**

Exploring winter changes

**FEB**

**"Connection"**

Exploring love,  
Community  
Traveling

**MAR**

**"The Universe"**

Space, Sun and Stars

**APR**

**"Roots & Branches"**

Talking about recycling, celebrating earth and world book day

**MAY**

**"Grow and Bloom"**

Spring changes  
celebrating family day

**JUN**

**"Splash"**

Sea animals, waterplay, the ocean, ocean animals

**JUL**

**"Summer"**

Explore galore

**JUL**

**"Summer"**

Explore galore

## Mark your calendar 2023/2024

### September

The 6/9 from 16.00 - 17.30  
Welcome back to school. Informative meeting for parents only.

### October.

week 42 (16-20) fall break. School is open but break from the program.

31/10 Halloween 9.30-15.30 Halloween party for the kids.

### November

23/11 Thanksgiving dinner for the children, during school opening hours.  
Thanksgiving donation for refugees.  
*Baskets will be available for families to donate toys and clothes they no longer use.*

### December

8/12 Christmas celebration for Stepping Stones families from 14.00-16.00. We will make Christmas decorations and try Danish Christmas treats.

25/12-26/12 National holidays

### January

26/1 Early dismissal. School closes at 14.15

### February

Week 7 (12 - 16) winter break. School is open but break from the program.

9/2 Fastelavn celebration (Carnival) for the kids during school hours.

### March

28 & 29 March, school is closed due to national holiday.

### April

1/4 school is closed due to national holiday.

22/4 Earth Day  
23/4 World Book Day

### May

9/5 school is closed due to national holiday.

17/5 family day. Plant a flower with your family in our garden. 14.00-15.30

20/5 school is closed due to national holiday

### June

5/6 school is closed

14/6 14.00 - 16.00 End Of The Year celebration for Stepping Stones families.

### July-August

We are open all year round but In July and August we have a break from our regular program and a more free outdoorsy life. Many children and teachers will be taking holidays during this period. This is also the time the team plan for the upcoming school year.