

## Gatschhüpfen – Naturkindergruppe am Himmel

### What is Gatschhüpfen – Naturkindergruppe am Himmel?

The "Naturkindergruppe am Himmel - Gatschhüpfen" is a small outdoor kindergarten in the hills around Vienna, totally imbedded in nature. It is a non-profit organisation run by the parents of the children attending the kindergarten. The idea of the organisation is based on a humanistic philosophy. We live diversity, are open minded to different cultures, religions and rainbow families. The main targets of the teachers are to build up an individual relationship with the kids and to respect and take serious the individual needs of the kids. Our meaning of education is more to accompany the children and help if they need it, but not lecture them. Each child is accepted as an individual, encouraged to develop self-consciousness and self-confidence. The main focus of our kindergarten is on being in nature. The kids spend most of the time outside, in the woods and fields around or in their own kindergarten "garden". Besides the kindergarten building the kids have a Mongolian yurt where they can have shelter in case of heavy rain or really cold weather. There are maximum 14 kids/day between 2,5 and 6 years with 2 teachers looking after them from Monday to Friday from 8:15am till 4:00pm. The kids are picked up from the teachers at a meeting point at two different tube stations in the city and then go up in the Viennese hills to their kindergarten by public transport (20minutes). We regularly have volunteers, the teachers offer caring an experience in accompanying them and the kids are used and open to "Newcomers". The parents are involved in the daily life of the kindergarten, like once a week for a cooking service or for everything what is needed to run a kindergarten, like buying material for handicraft work, snacks, looking after the yurt, the garden, organising, etc. The "Gatschhüpfen" offers a family like environment for the kids and the teacher team.

### Proposed activities

Our Kindergarten is open from Monday to Friday from 8:15 to 16:00, and we would like you to participate in the daily life from 8:15 to maximum 15:00, Friday also finish earlier, with a break of half an hour at lunch time.

You will support the teachers in their daily work with the kids during the day.

A typical day looks like this:

- 8:15 meeting kids and teacher; accompanying kids to the starting point at "Cobenzl" up in the Viennese hills by public transport
- 8:40 walking through nature to the kindergarten building (minimum 15 minutes to 4 hours, depending on the route and the plan of the day, discover nature, do activities together, etc.
- 9:00/9:30 snack somewhere in nature, kids have their own snack with them
- 12:00 lunch time (we have a cook, on Fridays parents prepare the lunch)  
After lunch the kids will repose, reading, playing silently, or are picked up by their parents (especially the smaller ones)
- 13:30/14:00 go outside in the kindergarten garden and to the yurt, play, read, do handicrafts
- 14:30/15:00 have a snack
- 16:00 closing time, everybody will leave

Your tasks will be the following:

- Accompany the kids by public transport
- Walking with the teachers and them to the kindergarten/crossing streets, etc.
- Play, paint, sing, read, do handicraft with the children
- Bring in your own ideas, your personality, plan and realize own activities supported by the teachers team or parents
- Bring in your own cultural background and mother language, food, games from your country, etc.
- Help before/during and after lunch with the food and dishes
- help to prepare the afternoon snack
- help the parents with some organisational tasks depending on your skills
- take part in parents meetings and teacher meetings
- help to maintain the garden and the yurt

Your social and pedagogical learning outcomes will be the following, you will learn how to

- observe the children's play and not to direct it
- motivate without disciplining
- support to solve conflict situations or problems
- motivate kids
- teach them to do things by themselves
- communicate in a non-violent way
- react on kids in different life and emotional stages
- see them as individuals and learn more about their different personalities

Furthermore you will learn

- how a parents administered organisation is working
- what different tasks have to be fulfilled to run an organisation
- how democratic communication, planning and decision taking is working in a self-administered organisation.
- How to dress in different weather conditions
- around Vienna

You will get to know

- Austrian culture and food
- Vienna and its surroundings
- German language
- Different ways of living and thinking
- What kind of plants are growing and animals are living in the hills around Vienna

### **Volunteer profile and recruitment process**

We are an open minded organisation, we don't discriminate any applicant because of his/her gender, religion, sexual orientation, cultural background, etc. The volunteers should - like working and being with children - be open minded - be interested in learning and getting to know different cultures, ways of thinking, languages, people - interested in human beings, especially in children and treat them with respect and see them as individuals. - like challenges and reflect on them - be willing to become a part of our organisation and learn from each other - love and respect nature - be weather resistance, as we are an outdoor kindergarten.

The ESC volunteering project is coordinated by Grenzenlos within the MELANGE program. If you are interested, fill in the Melange application form and send it together with your CV and the details of your supporting organization to Grenzenlos: [application@melange.at](mailto:application@melange.at)  
They will forward your application to the hosting project (Gatschhüpfer) where the selection will be made.

All available placements of Grenzenlos EVS projects are open to everyone (fulfilling the general EVS criteria). However, in the selection procedure a preference is shown for candidates with fewer opportunities (gender, background etc.). You will be informed about the outcome of recruitment process conforming to the set out applying deadlines (more: [Melange Website](#)).