

# The Galjevica Kindergartens in Slovenia



Galjevica Kindergartens are fee-based, state kindergartens located in Ljubljana, accommodating children from 11 months to 6 years old. In Slovenia, mothers receive paid maternity leave for one year, starting one month before birth. These kindergartens provide early childhood education and care during the crucial developmental phase before formal schooling begins.

The objective of early childhood education in Slovenia is to promote the development of a wide range of skills and knowledge, such as:

- understanding and acceptance of oneself and others,
- ability to relate to others, to cooperate and to respect diversity,
- identification of emotions, emotional experiencing and expression,
- curiosity, research spirit, imagination, intuition and independent thinking,
- language development for the effective and creative use of speech and, at a later stage, also reading and writing,
- experiencing works of art and understanding artistic expression,
- gaining knowledge from various fields of science and everyday life,
- physical and motor development,
- independence in hygiene routines and in the care for one's own health.

(Ministry of Education, 2024, [source](#))

**For the complete kindergarten curriculum please follow this [link](#).**

## Literacy and Numeracy

There is no provision for literacy in the curriculum, but educators use many pre-literacy activities to develop fine motor skills which are necessary to hold pens correctly at a

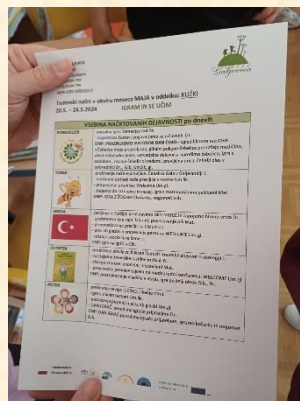
later stage. These fine motor exercises start as early as when the children enter kindergarten and continue until they leave for school. Educators use a wide variety of methods, and many of the activities take place outside, in the open air.

Also, the vast majority of teachers have a theme in the 3-6 age range, where children learn to recognise numbers and letters (at least the letters of their name, the first and last sounds, the rhythm of syllables, etc.). Children often work with numbers and letters in a wide variety of activities, and everything is cross-curricular.

Early literacy is often supported by the [NTC learning system](#), a program in line with new discoveries in the field of neuroscience.

### An Open Curriculum

At Galjevica Kindergartens, educators follow an **open curriculum**, meaning that teachers observe the children and plan according to their **interests**. Despite this flexibility, teachers still follow a **structured curriculum**, delivering it through an **integrated approach**. They plan ahead to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are effectively targeted.



A sample planning scheme for a kindergarten class.

### The Learning Environment

At Galjevica Kindergartens, children learn, play, feed and rest all within the same room. The classrooms are designed with low windows, offering children the opportunity to look outside while allowing natural light to flood in. This is because educators believe that natural light creates a more favourable environment compared to artificial lighting.





Ample storage space is available, with one wall dedicated entirely to storage to ensure a clutter-free environment. The storage units feature concealed shelving, except for the section where children can freely access games for play.

To create an open play space, desks are easily moved against the walls. Their rectangular design minimizes space when not in use.



Desks in the classrooms of 3 to 4-year-olds are moved against the walls for nap time after lunch.



## Wall Displays

To maintain a clutter-free environment, educators neatly display children's work in frames along the corridors, changing the artifacts regularly.



Alternatively, they use notice boards for displaying children's work, again changing the showcased work regularly.



Afterward, the children's work is archived in portfolios.



Items suspended from the ceiling are hung from branches, but this is done sparingly in classrooms to maintain a natural and uncluttered feel.



Wall displays within classrooms are positioned at the children's eye level for easy engagement.



### Documentation and Reporting

Each teachers has to write two reports (see below) on each child, one in the beginning of the school year and one at the end. The reports are not sent to parents. They are internal documents. Each parent has the possibility of attending 10 individual meetings. Most parents visit the teacher 2 to 3 times during the school year. They get a detailed report on the child's development in all areas. The teacher explains any discrepancies and gives guidance to help the child develop holistically and in terms of individual skills. If there are major deviations, or the teacher decides that the child needs additional guidance and support, then the child is referred to a specialist.

The lack of formal progress monitoring (i.e. no tests or grades) makes teachers' task all the more important, as they have to keep track of the objectives for each child, which can be very hard. However, the advantage of this system is that the child is monitored every day, all year round, not just on what he or she does on a test. If the teacher thinks that the child would benefit from one extra year in the kindergarten, they can inform the parents and start the procedure that allows the child to stay one extra year.

**E-FORM FOR MONITORING THE CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT**  
**school year 2023/2024 (internal material)**

Name and surname of the child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Age (in months): \_\_\_\_\_

Unit/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Educator and assistant educator: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. MOTOR DEVELOPMENT**

**1.1. Gross Motor Skills**

Date	Description
October	
March	

**1.2. Fine motor skills and graphomotor skills**

Date	Description
October	
March	

**2. SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

**2.1. Understanding language (words, concepts, instructions, tasks, messages)**

Date	Description
October	
March	

**2.2. Speech and language expression** (eloquence, intelligibility of speech, articulation, tempo, rhythm, vocabulary, form of sentences, content and grammatical appropriateness, memory recall – songs, talks; uses temporal and spatial concepts, understands what a story is about, sees mistakes, participates in a joint conversation)

Date	Description
October	
March	

### 3. COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

**3.1. Mathematical concepts** (knowledge of the properties of objects - shape, color, size; classification according to several criteria; classification into a group according to some property (e.g. color); conservation - determining the conservation of quantity; quantitative and numerical representations, orientation in space, repetition of numbers, recognizes and names characters and geometric bodies...)

Date	Description
October	
March	

**3.2. Memorization** (short-term – instructions, tasks, repetition of words, numbers, etc.; long-term – songs, recall of past experiences and information)

Date	Description
October	
March	

### 4. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**4.1. Relationships with peers and adults** (how does he join the group; does he seek contact with peers; how does he find his place in the group - managed, submissive; the group's relationship with the child; participates in activities; plans; establishes relationships/friendships (with whom and how, what roles does he take in the group; is he ready to help others, the weaker ones; how does he react to the situation; failure)

Date	Description
October	
March	

**4.2. Activity and attention** (appropriate/excessively active; calm/restless; extent/intensity of attention, reliability/constancy of attention; influence of external stimuli on attention; when better/worse attention; how he organizes himself and his work; persists, participates, can wait)

Date	Description
October	
March	

**4.3. Behavior** (interest, mood, motivation – willingness to work, is there a difference in areas, special areas of interest, desire to succeed, reprimand/praise)

Date	Description
October	
March	

**4.4. Awareness of oneself and one's role** (self-image, seeing oneself; autonomy, independence; able to find one's role in a group; able to accept the consequences and responsibilities of one's actions; needs help)

Date	Description
October	
March	

## 5. CARE OF SELF/OTHERS

5.1. **Independence** (dressing, feeding, personal care – toilet habits, cleanliness, etc.)

Date	Description
October	
March	