

Drop-off & Pick-up: Movement Possibilities in the Entrance Area of the Kindergarten

Tool: Diamond Ranking

Context:



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|---------------------------------|--|
| Pre-School location | German language Kindergarten Milland South Tyrol, Italy |
| Details about students | age range: 2-7 years approximate number on roll: 90 children (4 groups), 12 educators relevant characteristics of students: inclusive approach and pedagogical concept of opening |
| School premises | size, age, typology: ca. 250 m², spread over two floors, build 1970 |
| School context | city, sub-urban, town, rural; language of instruction: city, german |
| Type of activity | whole school, classroom, outdoor, indoor, redesign, new design etc.: entrance area and outdoor: playground, redesign |
| Stage in design process: | in use reflection |





Tool used: Diamond Ranking

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/cored/tools/diamond-ranking/>

The tool is first tested with the educators and then carried out with the children for specific design concerns (pedagogical space planning). Dates of testing:

- a) November 2021 with pedagogical staff
- b) April 2022 Discussion of results with the pedagogical staff

Rationale for activity and tool adopted

In the kindergarten district of Bressanone, space and room design have long been a topic in the pedagogical work and are actively supported by the kindergarten district management. As the pedagogical concept of opening is basically applied, themes and functions are assigned to the individual rooms or parts of rooms. Thus, in all kindergartens of the district there is a room for language education, a room for science and/or mathematics education, a movement room and studios for artistic work. The design of the rooms in each kindergarten is adapted to the structural conditions.

In the pedagogical concept of opening up, the children have the opportunity to use the rooms throughout the kindergarten according to their needs during free play time. In doing so, they are accompanied by the pedagogical staff and encouraged to deal with different topics and play ideas.

In the Milland kindergarten, the use and design of the rooms as a whole is to be analyzed. The focus is on the four group rooms. The pedagogical staff is interested in discussing the potential for change and development of the room design.

Case study description: Process

Participants: Kindergarten management, team and a representative of the district management.

In a preparatory meeting with the kindergarten management and a representative of the kindergarten district management, the steps of the joint work with the instrument were determined and photographs of the kindergarten (the interior and exterior) were taken by the researcher from the CoReD project. Ideas of the room design as a whole were discussed, but also the special framework conditions of the pedagogical work due to the regulations during the pandemic.

In a second meeting, the instrument was tested. In the run-up to the meeting, the project staff selected photographs corresponding to the impressions and agreements from the preparatory meeting. This resulted in one overarching theme for the Diamond Ranking: Connections of indoor and outdoor areas of the four rooms and their design possibilities. The central question for the Diamond Ranking is where the greatest development potential of a space is seen. Or which room should be changed immediately.

The work of the pedagogical team and the kindergarten children with the Diamond Ranking was recorded, transcribed and used for the results of the use of the instrument. The poster with the Diamond Rankings is also photographed.

In another pedagogical workshop, the results of the Diamond Rankings were discussed and validated with the team.

Photo * documentation - Diamond Ranking Selection

ENTRANCE & ACCESS ROUTES



fig. 1: entry stairs



fig. 2: entry door



fig. 3: info panel



fig. 4: passage

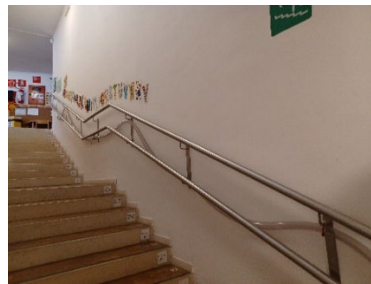


fig. 5: stair to basement

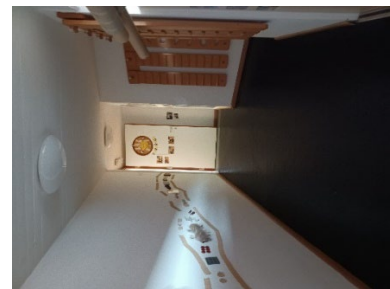


fig. 6: access to exercise room



Fig. 7: curve to exercise room



fig.: entrance area inside



fig.: entrance area/meal

OUTDOOR AREAS



Fig. 1: Exterior view



fig. 2: Play area (1)



fig. 3: Play area (2)



Fig. 4: Play area (3)



fig. 5: Play area (4)



fig. 6: Play area (5)



Fig. 7: Play area (6)



fig. 8: Play area (7)



fig. 9: Play area (8)

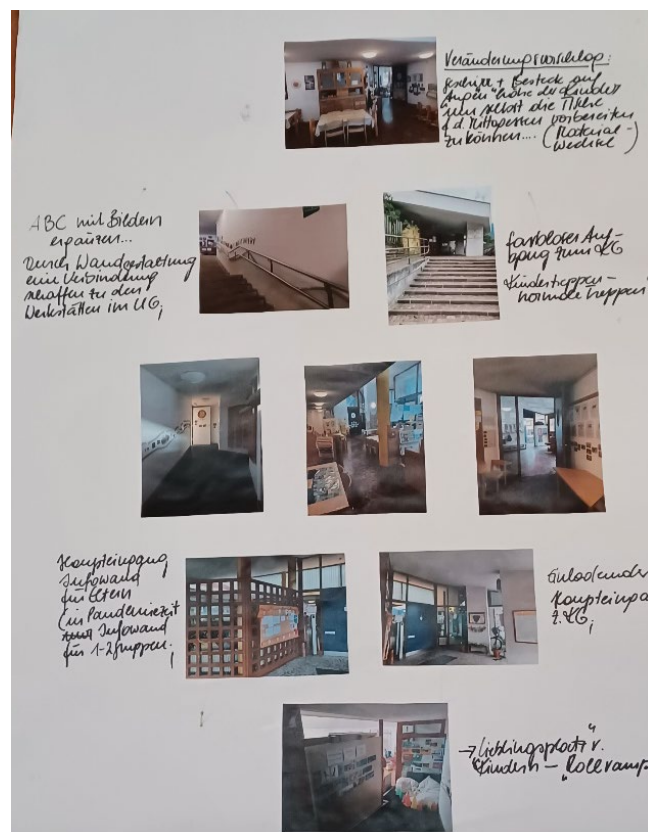
Case study description: Outcomes

Results from the Diamond Rankings made by the pedagogical staff

The objective of the first workshop with the pedagogical staff was to get to know the Diamond Ranking tool and to plan further cooperation in the project. For this purpose, the pedagogical staff in the kindergarten created a Diamond Ranking themselves. The task was to put the room situation at the top of the Diamond Ranking, which absolutely has to be changed. In other words, the greatest potential for change would have to be defined. In order to document the discussion and the decision-making process and to analyze them afterwards, the conversations of the pedagogical professionals were recorded and transcribed. In addition to the discussion of the content, the pedagogical professionals were also asked about their impression regarding the use of the tool. This feedback was also recorded and transcribed.

In the kindergarten Milland, a total of 9 pedagogical professionals, including the kindergarten management and a representative of the kindergarten district, took part in the workshop as part of the project. The results are two Diamond Rankings:

1) Entrance & Access Route



Comments on the pictures

Fig. 1: Entrance stairs

Colorless staircase to the kindergarten / children's stairs - normal stairs

Fig.2: Entrance door

Inviting main entrance to the kindergarten

Fig. 3: Info panel

Main entrance info board for parents / in pandemic time info board for 1-2 groups

Fig. 4: Passage

No comment

Fig. 5: Stairs to the basement

Add ABC with pictures... / Create a connection to the workshops in the basement through wall design.

Fig. 6: Access to exercise room

No comment

Fig. 7: Curve to exercise room

"Favorite place" of children - "Roll ramp"

Fig. 8: Entrance area inside

No comment

Fig. 9: Entrance area/meal

Suggestion for change: dishes + cutlery at eye level of the children to be able to prepare the tables for lunch themselves ... (material change)

2) Outdoor Areas



No comments on the poster.

It was agreed that the Diamond Ranking would now be implemented by the kindergarten teachers themselves with the children, without project support. The plan is for children to take their own photographs, for nine photos to be selected from these for a Diamond Ranking, and for children to create a Diamond Ranking. The kindergarten team will be responsible for documenting the implementation.

In spring 2021, the teachers sent out three groups of children to photograph their favourite places in the kindergarten. All groups took many photos and independently, with a little help from the teacher, selected nine photos each for the Diamond Ranking. The children had to decide which area in the kindergarten was their favourite place to play (top in the DR). The other eight pictures were arranged accordingly. The result was three Diamond Rankings. The first group of children named their Diamond Ranking "Favourite Place", the second group named their Diamond Ranking "Most Beautiful Place" and the third group named their Diamond Ranking "Our Places". All the children involved were of pre-school age, i.e. between five and six years old.

3) Diamond Ranking of the Kindergarten Children

DIAMOND RANKING





Fig. 1

Liebingsplatz



„Weil man die Kugeln kann und weil das toll ist!“
Aber 4 Kinder sagen darüber

Fig. 1




Fig. 2




Fig. 1




Fig. 4




Fig. 5




Fig. 6

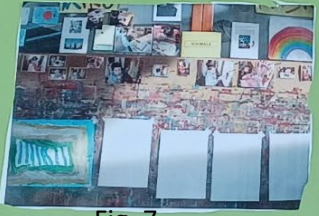


Fig. 7




Fig. 8




Fig. 9

„Auslegen am Kinder“
„Weil das bei aus Karton gemacht ist!“
„Weil das schön ist und weil das net so cool ist!“
„Weil wenn man was baut dann was da sein kann und weil es net so in die Höhe ist und das bei freischichten sein und weil“

DR 1: Favourite Place

Diamond Ranking „Favourite Place“ (Fig. 1)

The following areas of the kindergarten have been photographed, arranged and commented on by the children:

Fig. 1: Box in the movement room

Weil man do hupfen kann und weil des toll isch (Because you can hop there and because that's great) - all four children say the same thing; unanimous decision

Fig.: 2: Microscope in the research room

Fig. 3: Cave made of swing cloth in the construction room

Fig. 4: map

Fig. 5: Wall bars in the movement room

Fig. 6: Gluing and painting in the creative room

Fig. 7: Picture wall

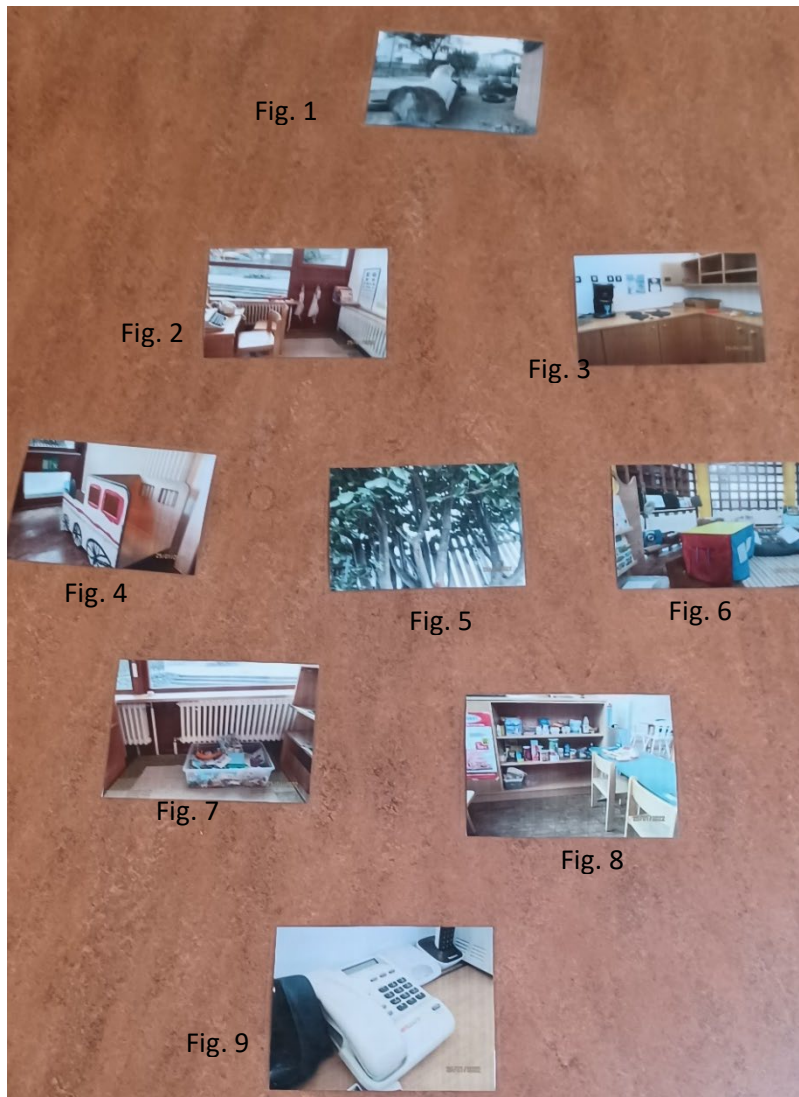
Fig. 8: Construction corner

Fig. 9: Building with egg cartons

Weil des lei aus Karton gemacht is / weil des kean Ort is und weil des net so cool isch / weil wenn man was baut, dann weards gern hin und sel / weil des in der Höhle isch und des lei Eierschalen sin (Because it's made of cardboard / because it's not a place and because it's not cool / because when you build something, you like to go back and forth / because it's in a cave and it's eggshells) - quick agreement that this is not a good place to play.

The discussion of the children was accompanied by the educators and the following process of the discussion was documented:

The children, 2 girls and two boys of pre-school age, were able to quickly agree which place was their favourite and which place was not a good place to play. Much more difficult was the decision about the arrangement of the pictures 2 to 8. Here the discussion of the children was influenced by who took which photo. That is, each child tried to place his or her photo on a better place in the Diamond Ranking.



DK 2: Most beautiful place

Diamond Ranking „Most beautiful place“ (DK. 2)

The following areas of the kindergarten have been photographed, arranged and commented on by the children:

Fig. 1: Outdoor area, tree trunk

Fig. 2: Typewriter, writing place

Fig. 3: Children's kitchen

Fig. 4: Locomotive

Fig. 5: Leaf canopy

Fig. 6: Reading corner

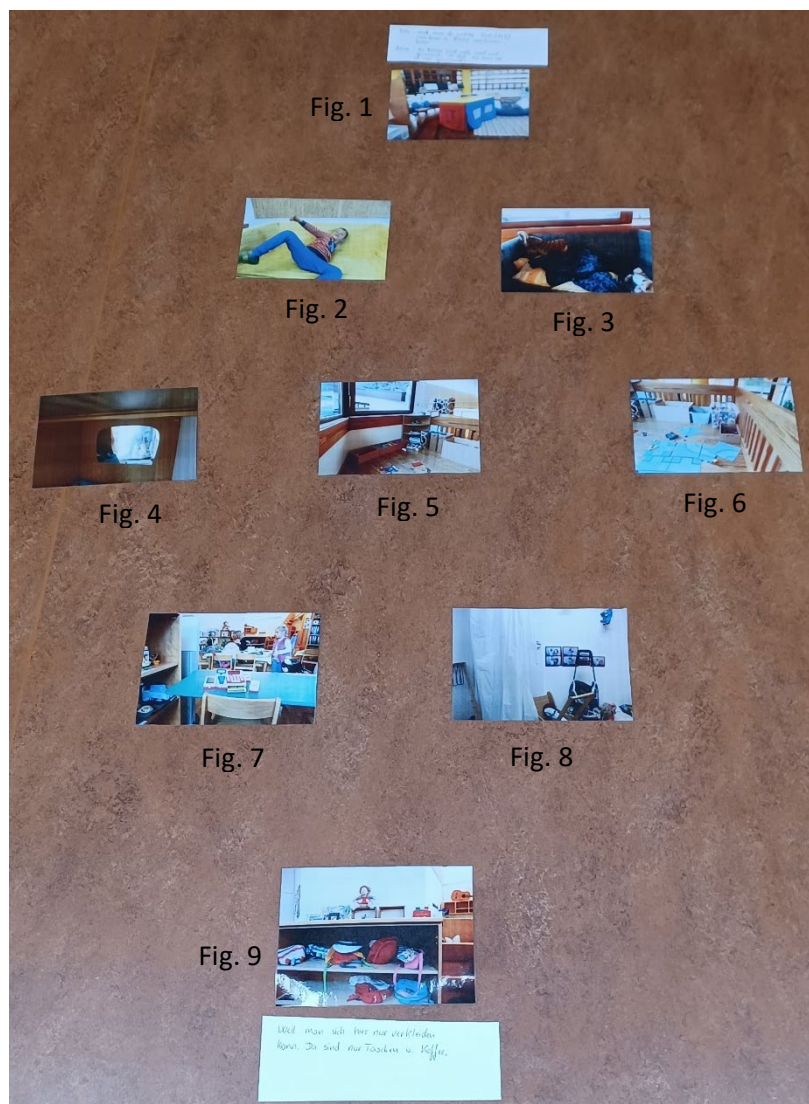
Fig. 7: Play and craft materials

Fig. 8: Shop

Fig. 9: Old telephone

The discussion of the four children, one boy and three girls, was accompanied by the educators and the following sequence of the discussion was documented:

The children discussed for a long time which area in the kindergarten is best. They could not decide whether they preferred the role play room, the maths and construction room, or the garden. In the end, a garden area was placed at the top of the Diamond Ranking because all the children felt that this was the best place to make things up. In addition, this place was named as a retreat and hiding place. The children quickly agreed on what they didn't like: the old telephone, because it's not good for playing telephone games. The question of what is the most beautiful place in the kindergarten was answered differently by each of the children. It was difficult to reach an agreement because each child has its own favourite place. Therefore, the question had to be changed and beautiful places were searched for and the photos were arranged accordingly. After changing the question, the four children were able to agree more easily.



DK3: Our places

Diamond Ranking „Our places“ (DK 3)

The following areas of the kindergarten have been photographed, arranged and commented on by the children:

Fig. 1: Library, reading corner

Junge 1: weil man da unterm Tisch (Zelt) sein kann und Bücher anschauen kann / Junge 2: die Bücher sind volle cool und spannend, im Zelt zu sein ist es viel spannender (Boy 1: because you can be there under the table (tent) and look at books / Boy 2: the books are full cool and exciting, being in the tent is much more exciting)

Fig.: 2: yellow sofa

Fig. 3: Sofa corner

Wo man kuscheln kann (Where to cuddle)

Fig. 4: Cave

Fig. 5: Lego on the gallery

Fig. 6: Lego for constructing in the building area

Fig. 7: Shop

Fig. 8: Role play room, clothes & blankets

Fig. 9: Role play room, bags & hats

Weil man sich hier nur verkleiden kann / da sind nur Taschen und Koffer (Because here you can only dress up / there are only bags and suitcases)

The discussion of the two boys was accompanied by the educators and the following process of the discussion was documented:

The two boys took the photos together and looked for places where they liked to be. They were both very enthusiastic about the task of taking and evaluating photos. They were able to agree very quickly on what the Diamond Ranking should look like. Probably because they had already exchanged and agreed when taking the pictures.

In retrospect, the educators assess the work of all the children on the Diamond Ranking as positive, because they were finally able to agree and contribute their personal evaluations. The idea of letting the children take the photos themselves was also evaluated positively by the educators, since the children photographed completely different places in the kindergarten than the adults. When using the Diamond Ranking with kindergarten children, the kindergarten teachers found the selection of the photos and the questioning very difficult. In the final discussion among the kindergarten teachers about the Diamond Rankings of the children, it became clear that the children's perspective is particularly effective. This allowed the teachers to develop a different view of the rooms and corners of the kindergarten. The contrast between the children's perspective and the adults' perspective is helpful.

Recommendation for using the Diamond Ranking with kindergarten children:

The photos should definitely be taken by the children themselves and the question for ordering the Diamond Ranking must be well thought out beforehand.