

## Tartu Kindergarten Kröll

*Let every day in child's life begin with joy and end with peace!*



### Where we are?

Tartu is a unique student city with emphasis on culture. It is the second largest city in Estonia with a population of 97 847 people. There are a variety of cultural and sports events taking place throughout the year. The old town of Tartu possesses wonderful examples of architecture from the Middle Ages to modern styles. Tartu is a youthful and safe city.

The quickest way to move around Tartu is by public transport (busses). The volunteer will have a public transport card to get around the city. There are also many pedestrian roads for walking, running and cycling. We have shopping centres and different ways and places where to spend your free time (theatres, sport clubs, cinemas, coffees and bars, clubs e.t.c).

Our kindergarten is located in a part of the city called Annelinn, where many people of different nationalities and cultures live. The kindergarten is surrounded by other institutes of education. The closest grocery store is about 5 minute walk away and a mall about 15 minutes walk away.

### Who we are?

Kindergarten „Kröll“ (our homepage: <https://tartukroll.weebly.com/>) in Tartu serves children ages 2-7 and is open 7 am until 6.30 pm. Our institution has 12 groups of children. Every group has 20 children.. One of them specialises in educating children with special needs (12 children in a group) and one is an integration group with a child with special needs (18 children). Altogether there are 223 children in our kindergarten. Every children's group has three people working for them (2 teachers and 1 teacher's aid). Their schedule is set up in shifts – there are 2 teachers working with a group at all times. Our teachers, physical exercise specialists and music teachers are kind and professional. Also there are three full-time support specialists - two speech therapists and a special needs educator. In addition we employ a trained nurse and a psychologist. We also have our own kitchen with two cooks who are making food three times a day (breakfast, lunch and evening snack) for all of the kids and staff (including the volunteer). We also have a small garden area, where we can grow some vegetables, flowers etc and teach children gardening.





## What we do?

The day starts with learning activities set in the national curriculum. After these activities children have the chance to spend an hour in the outdoors playground. That is followed by lunch and a so called „quiet hour“, during which children rest or take their nap. The evening is filled with individual activities and playing.



In order to make learning more interesting, we use the newest IT and robotic devices and tools in the teaching process. We have an interactive SmartBoard, Blue-Bot and BeeBot robots and OzobotEvo robot, interactive story-telling pencils. We also have other technological devices e.c tablets, projectors, document cameras and computers that everybody can use.



In addition to that, groups go on excursions and have traditional theme days e.g. Kadri fair, Christmas celebration, kindergarten´s birthday, Estonian Independence Day, Valentines day etc. Besides celebrating traditional activities, we also have national and international health days, e.g. Heart Week, Bread and Milk Week etc.





There are also some traditional activities where kids' parents are included like Mihkel's fair, Father's day, end of schoolyear's „Mäepidu“ (hill's party) etc.



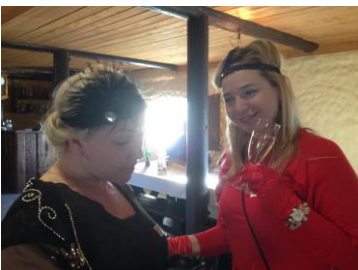
Our children also take part bigger events in Tartu – field day for all Tartu's kindergartens (about 700 kids take part in it), kid's song and dance festivals etc.



Once a month there is a theatre performance for the kids by professionals or by older kindergarten groups.



There are also events for just the staff members – christmas celebrations, summer day's, theme parties, birthday celebrations, theatre and fair visits, city's healthy living promotion activities etc. We also have teacher's acting group, what does a play for our kids and we also go to perform in other kindergartens.





## Proposed activities:

### Activities the volunteer takes part in:

Four days out of the week (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday) the volunteer will be helping the special needs group's teachers in her work. The daily schedule for those days is:  
*8am-9am:* Breakfast; discussing day's activities/classes and if needed, then making materials for those activities.

*9am-11am:* helping teachers during scheduled activities (art, P.E, music, Estonian language, math, social studies) – set up the working place and help kids individually during activity (e.g in art class); playing and interacting with children during their play time; making educational games for children and playing them; organise theme days just for the one group; take part in excursions with children.

*11am-12am:* helping kids to get ready for going outside (dressing); playing with kids in kindergarten's playground; take part and come up with outdoor games for the kids.

*12am-2pm:* coming inside with children (helping them get dressed); lunch; analysing the day's activities (what went well, what needs to be improved; what kind of activities/games would you like to do next time); if needed then during that time volunteer can also make new games/materials for the next day's activities.

On Tuesdays the volunteer will be helping physical exercise specialist in P.E classes with all the kindergarten groups (every group have their own scheduled time for P.E class in the curriculum). Children groups that are taking part of the P.E classes are in different ages (2-7 years). P.E classes take place in kindergarten's hall or outside. The daily schedule for Tuesday is:

*8am-9am:* Breakfast; discussing day's activities/classes, come up with your own P.E games ideas and if needed then making materials for those activities.

*9am-1pm:* Helping P.E teachers during activities with all the kindergarten groups (individual help, if some kid needs more attention or guidance). Participate and help to organise different physical activities and theme days for all the children (e.g spider web day, field day). In winter, older groups (ages 5 to 7) take part in classes outside the kindergarten (skiing and ice-skating lessons) and the volunteer will also take part in them – helping the kids to put on skates/skis and the volunteer can also try skating/skiing.

*1pm-2pm:* lunch; analysing the day's activities (what went well, what needs to be improved; what kind of activities/games would you like to do next time).



Once in a month there will be a meeting with a tutor, where the volunteer will reflect and analyse the activities he/she has done or taken part in; discuss the ups and downs; solve any recurring problems; share information; make plans for the future activities and set goals.

### Activities the volunteer can choose to take part in:

\*On one afternoon (3pm-5pm) the volunteer helps to organise and take part/lead a hobby class for children. E.g robotics class for the older children (ages 5-7). But the volunteer can also choose the theme for the hobby class - instead of robotics class there might be an extracurricular class of any topic that interests the volunteer as well as the kids.

\*According to the Kindergarten's activities calendar and national calendar, the volunteer can help the staff to organise joint events for all the kids, parents and staff. Help the staff to decorate the kindergarten and take part on staff meetings and activities after worktime (e.g. theatre visits; staff summer days, Christmas celebration).

\*Working with the special needs group gives the volunteer a chance to see how the speech and language therapist works. The volunteer can also meet the therapy dog Luna, see and learn how to include a dog into study sessions with special needs children.



### **Why come and join Kröll's family?**

We know what we are doing and we can pass our knowledge on to You. We are a practice base for Tartu University, meaning that students studying special needs education or kindergarten teaching, as well as nursing students or in-service training participants, can apply for training within the kindergarten. Students also observe our integrated learning activities. We arrange teacher-to-teacher training sessions for other kindergarten teachers in Tartu (topics such as robotics and IT communication technologies, integrated learning activities).

Volunteering in the children's group teaches the methodology how to work with special needs children. It also gives the volunteer a chance to learn about speech therapy and how to include animals into teaching the special needs children.

Taking part in P.E. classes teaches the techniques of physical activities and movement with children in ages 2 to 7.

In robotics class, the volunteer learns to use different interactive and robotic devices in the learning process. Or gives the volunteer the knowledge how to lead a hobby group in the topic he/she likes.

Planning and taking part of the events gives the volunteer the knowledge how to plan an event according to the topic and target audience. It also helps the volunteer to mingle with other staff members and feel part of the team and also learn about the Estonian culture.

We are open and ready to adapt the details of participation according to the volunteer's interests and needs. The kindergarten is flexible in schedules and arrangements – children's groups can be switched up; P.E. classes can be replaced by classroom work; instead of robotics class there might be an extracurricular class of any topic that interests the volunteer as well as the kids or the volunteer can choose to do a hobby class not for the children, but for the staff.

### **How can we solve and prevent problems?**

We will provide information about the country and Estonian culture (traditions, habits, values). We can also offer help with suitable activities for time off work. We will include the volunteer in the daily work and any events arranged in and outside the kindergarten (that includes events for employees).

We set up meetings in order to solve problems and questions. We are open and ready to adapt the details of participation according to the volunteer's interests and needs. Kindergarten offers a tutor, who is willing to support and guide the volunteer. If necessary, we will ask help from EstYes contact person or the Erasmus+ European volunteer service coordinator.