

The development between 2021-2022 and 2025

Quality of childcare in the Caribbean Netherlands

April 2026

In 2025, the Inspectorate of Education surveyed, in association with the local inspectorate, the quality of childcare on Bonaire, Saba, and St. Eustatius. To this end we visited all 79 locations for daycare, out-of-school care, and host parent care. This report contains the outcome of that survey, also in comparison with the quality of childcare in 2024 and in 2021-2022.

Foreword

Childcare operators on the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba are increasingly steering on quality improvement. This means that the children are stimulated in their development to an ever-greater extent. I am very pleased with this development.

At the same time, there are also concerns. It remains difficult to find sufficient properly trained employees. That many employees do not have an up-to-date Certificate of Good Conduct (VOG) is an extremely vulnerable situation. This truly requires swift improvement.

Since 2026 we have been working with a new statutory framework. From 2026, we are working with a new legal framework on the basis of which stricter enforcement measures can also be applied. In this regard, we are looking even closer at what is going well, what can improve, and what must improve. We publish the results of the audits at the childcare locations on our website.

Alida Oppers
Inspector General of Education



Main points

- The quality of childcare in the Caribbean Netherlands has improved since the start of the BES(t) 4 kids programme and since the Inspectorate has been supervising the quality. In particular the quality of the childcare process and the quality assurance has increased. This means that the children are stimulated better in their development.
- The childcare management is steering increasingly more on the improvement of the childcare quality. It is important that childcare operators continue developing in this area.
- We do still observe room for improvement. Improvement is possible because there are also locations with the assessment Good that childcare operators of other locations can learn from.
- It is important that the childcare operators continue paying attention to the Certificates of Good Conduct (VOG) and the training level of the professionals.
- On 1 January 2026, the Childcare Act BES took effect. From that date we are supervising according to a new assessment framework that contains all legislation and regulations. We are still annually auditing the quality of childcare at all locations in association with the local inspectors of the Public Entities. All reports about the childcare locations can be consulted on our website [Supervision Results](#).

Why did we conduct this survey?

The BES(t) 4 kids programme started in 2019. In this programme, the Public Entities Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba and the Ministries of SZW, OCW, VWS, and BZK work with all local stakeholders on the strengthening of childcare in the Caribbean Netherlands (BES(t) 4 kids). Together with the childcare operators and the host parents they are committed to improving the quality of childcare. At the request of the Public Entities, the Inspectorate of Education has been supervising this since 2020. Since June 2021 we have actively been supervising all childcare locations on the three islands. We annually audit the quality of daycare, out-of-school care, and host parent care. We do this in cooperation with the local inspectors of the islands. We annually report on this. These annual reports are available on the website: [Reports childcare Caribbean Netherlands | Caribbean Netherlands | Inspectorate of Education](#)

On 1 January 2026, the Childcare Act BES took effect. This means that in 2025 we last used the old assessment framework, based on the three Island Ordinances. In this report, we present the state of the situation in 2025, also in comparison with the quality in 2024 and the quality in 2021-2022, when the benchmark measurement was conducted.

What did we survey?

In association with the local inspectorate on the three islands, we assessed the following questions:

1. Does the childcare comply with the requirements in the area of administration, staff and housing?
2. Are children being stimulated in their development?
3. Is it safe and healthy for children?
4. Is the childcare management steering on quality improvement?

The local inspectorate assessed (unannounced) the quality of childcare in the areas of Administration, Staff & Housing and Safety & Childcare Climate (questions 1 and 3). In case of shortcomings we agreed on remedy arrangements with a remedy period.

The Inspectorate assessed (announced) the quality of the Childcare Process and Steering, Quality Care & Ambitions (questions 2 and 4).

In 2025, we assessed all locations for childcare (daycare (DO), out-of-school care (BSO) and host parent care (HPC)) that, according to the registration of the Public Entities, dispose of an operating permit. This totals 79 locations:

- 68 on Bonaire: 28 for daycare, 34 for out-of-school care, and six for host parent care;
- eight on St. Eustatius: four for daycare and four for out-of-school care;
- three on Saba: one for daycare and two for out-of-school care.

The findings in 2025 were based on these 79 locations.

Changes between 2021-2022 and 2025

Between 2021-2022 and 2025 the number of locations on the islands changed. The table below contains the childcare locations in 2021-2022, 2024, and 2025. In this report, we only compare locations that we assessed in all years. As a result, a difference can be noted in the total number of locations in the various years.

Table 1. Overview of the number of childcare locations in 2021-2022, 2024, and 2025

	Total 2021-2022	Total 2024	Total 2025	Comparison 2025 and 2021-2022*	Comparison 2024 and 2025**
<i>Bonaire total</i>	57	68	68	47	60
Daycare	24	27	28	19	25
Out-of-school care	30	36	34	25	31
Host parent care	3	5	6	3	4
<i>Sint Eustatius total</i>	8	9	8	7	8
Daycare	5	5	4	4	4
Out-of-school care	3	4	4	3	4
Host parent care	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Saba total</i>	2	3	3	2	3
Daycare	1	1	1	1	1
Out-of-school care	1	2	2	1	2
Host parent care	0	0	0	0	0
Total	67	80	79	56	71

* For the comparison of the quality in 2021-2022 and in 2025, we use the data of the locations that we audited both in 2021-2022 and in 2025.

** For the comparison of the quality in 2024 and in 2025, we use the data of the locations that we audited both in 2024 and in 2025.

What are the main findings in 2025?

In this report we describe the main findings about the quality of childcare in the Caribbean Netherlands in 2025. In this chapter we compare these findings to the quality in 2024. This is shown in the figures below. They contain the standards and the underlying requirements. The opinions and assessments of all audited standards and underlying requirements are included in the technical report. The technical report is available on the website of the Inspectorate of Education: [Inspectorate of Education | Inspectorate of Education](#)

A tick  indicates that it is going well.
A cross  indicates that it can improve and
a triangle  indicates: pay attention!

Requirements in the area of Administration, Staff & Housing

Operating permit

Requirement: the childcare operator has an operating permit and complies with the requirements imposed on it by the Public Entity.

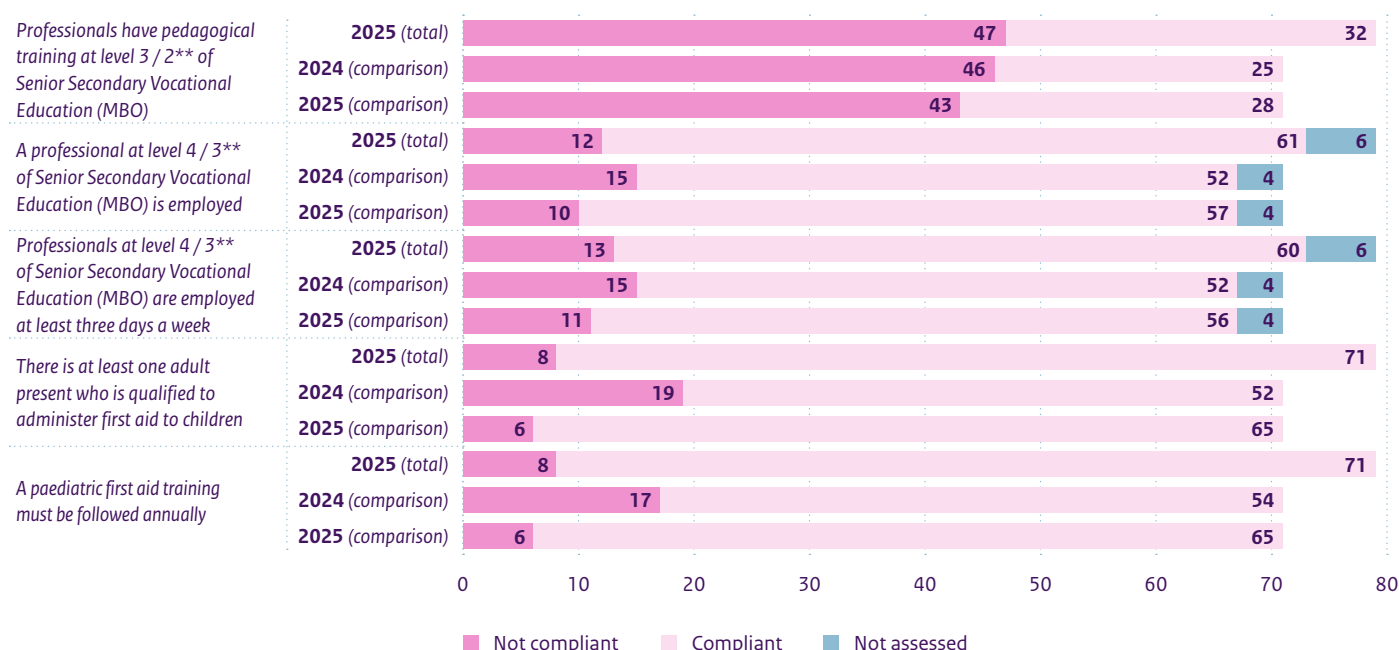
-  In 2025, almost all locations have a (valid) operating permit.
-  However, most of the locations do not comply with the conditions of the operating permit, including the following requirements in the area of staff and housing.

Staff – training

With regard to Bonaire, it applies that professionals must have training at level 3 of Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO). With regard to St. Eustatius and Saba, the professionals must have training at level 2 of Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO). In addition, with regard to Bonaire, it applies that a professional with training at level 4 of Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO) must be present at least three days a week. With regard to St. Eustatius and Saba, this is level 3 of Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO).

- ✓ Increasingly more professionals have Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO) training (at level 3 of 4) that specifically focuses on the identification of learning and development disadvantages.
- ✓ First Aid: the number of locations where at least one adult is present for the administration of first aid to children and where the annual paediatric first aid training is followed increased compared to 2024. This predominantly improved in the daycare. In 2025, most of the locations comply with both these requirements.
- ✗ Training level: at more than half of the locations, not all professionals have pedagogical training at the required level (2025). This is comparable to 2024.

Figure 1. Opleiding van het personeel op alle locaties in 2025 (n=79) en de oordelen in 2024 en 2025 (n=71)



Note 1: Standards are not always assessed, for instance when they are not applicable. For a number of standards, this is the guideline for host parent care (for more information, see the Technical Report).

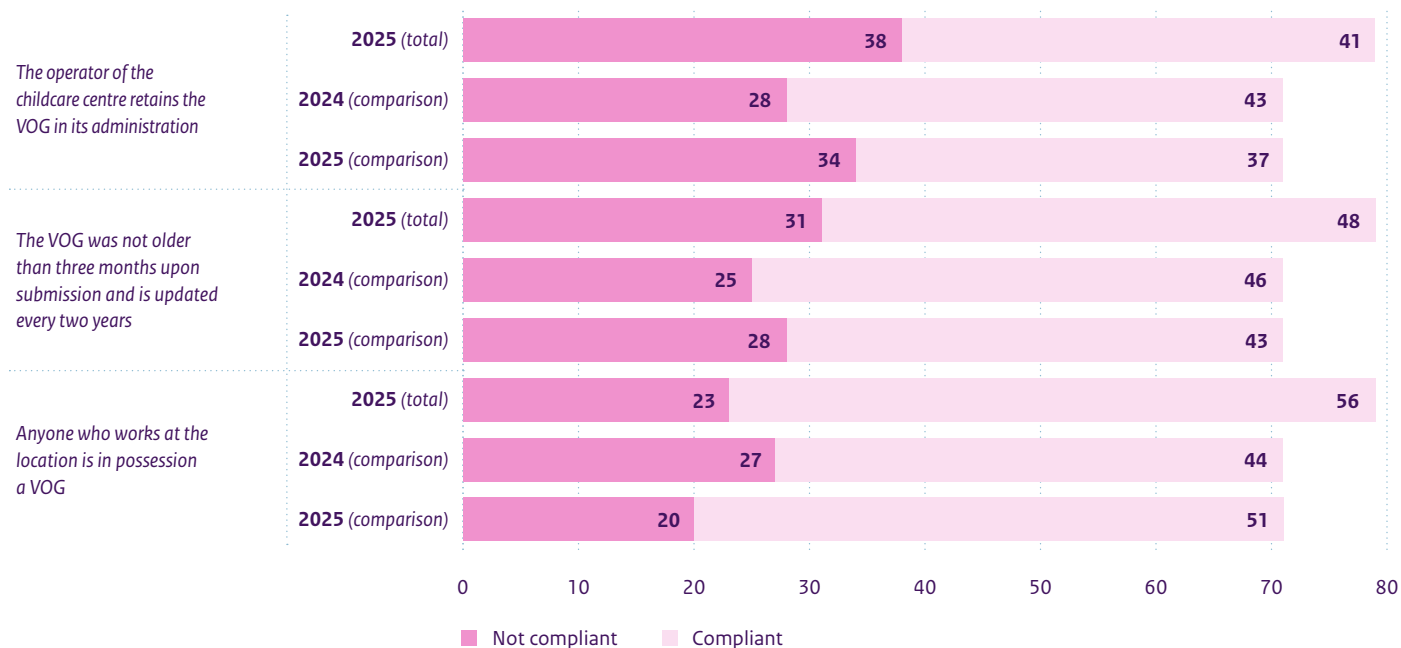
- * With regard to Bonaire, it applies that the professionals must have training at level 3 of Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO). With regard to St. Eustatius and Saba, the professionals must have training at level 2 of Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO) (level 2 of Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ))
- ** With regard to Bonaire, it applies that the professionals must have training at level 4 of Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO). With regard to St. Eustatius and Saba, this is level 3 of Senior Secondary Vocational Education (MBO) (level 3 of Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ-3)).

Staff – VOG

Anyone who works at a childcare centre must have a current Certificate of Good Conduct (VOG) This VOG must be retained in the administration of the operator.

- ✗ During the annual audit in 2025, many locations are still not meeting the requirements regarding the VOG:
 - At almost half of the locations, still not everyone has a VOG.
 - At well over a third of the locations, the VOG was older than three years or the VOG would not be updated every two years.
- At almost a third of the locations, the operator of the childcare centre did not retain the VOG in its administration.
- ✗ During the annual audit, we observed a deterioration in the availability of the VOG compared to 2024. Reasons for not complying with this requirement include, inter alia, staff changes, the employment of staff before the VOG has lapsed, (unfamiliarity with) the fact that a new VOG is required when moving to a different operator, and the considerable time it occasionally takes before the VOG is issued.
- ⚠ From 1 January 2026 we are supervising this rigidly and we may advise the SZW Unit of the RCN to impose a fine if an childcare operator / host parent repeatedly does not have the VOG in order.

Figure 2. OG at all locations in 2025 (n=79) and the assessments in 2024 and in 2025 (n=71)



Staff – deployment of staff

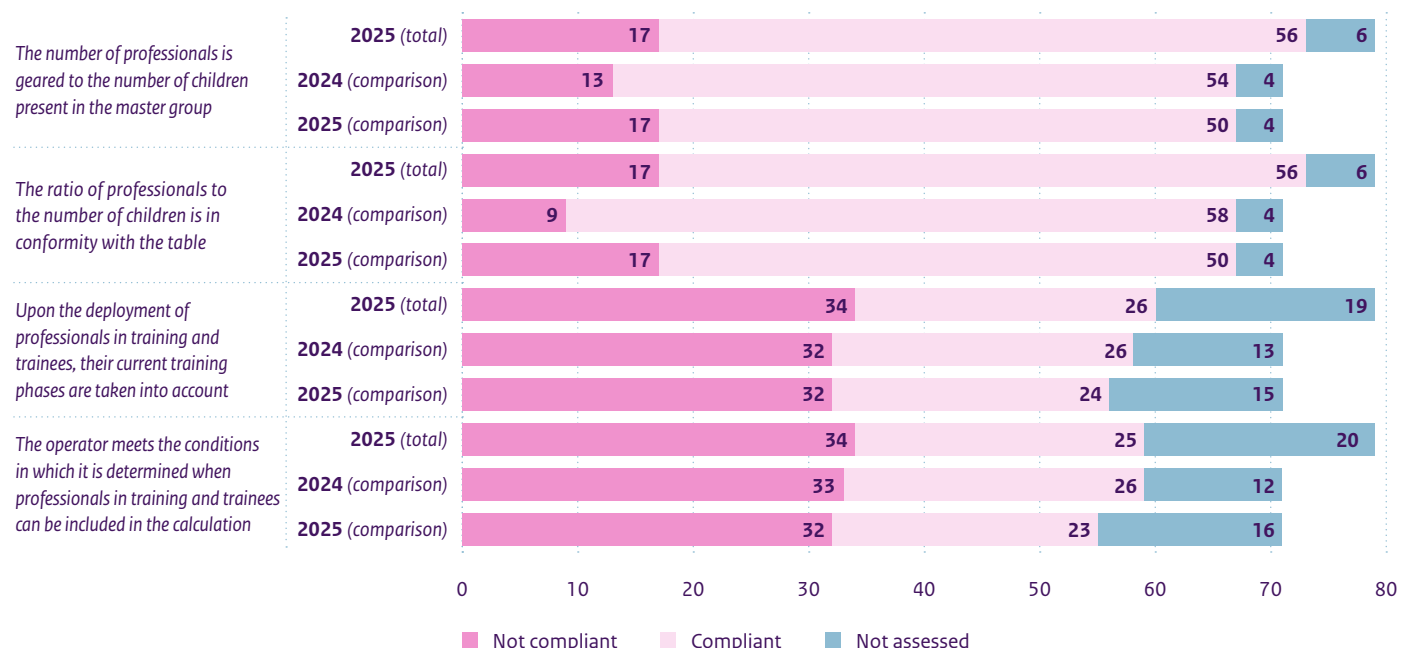
With this standard we assess whether the number of professionals meets the requirements and whether the requirements regarding the deployment of professionals in training and trainees are met.

- ✓ **Deployment of professionals:** in 2025, three quarters of the locations have sufficient professionals.
- ✗ **Professional to children ratio:** Compared to 2024, fewer locations comply with the required ratio of professional to the number of children. This can, for instance, occur if children have already started at the childcare whilst other children shortly turn four

and advance to primary education. The location will then, temporarily, have too many children. Another example is that the operator includes staff who do not meet the requirements, e.g. an assistant, in the professional to children ratio. This can also be attributed to the fact that it is difficult to find appropriate staff.

- ✗ **Deployment of trainees:** In 2025, not all locations comply with the requirements regarding the deployment of trainees. Of all audited locations, 34 take the training phase of the trainees insufficiently into account. In addition, they do not meet the condition of not including the trainees in the calculation of the number of professionals.

Figure 3. Deployment of trainees and professional to children ratio in 2025 (n=79) and the assessments in 2024 and in 2025 (n=71)

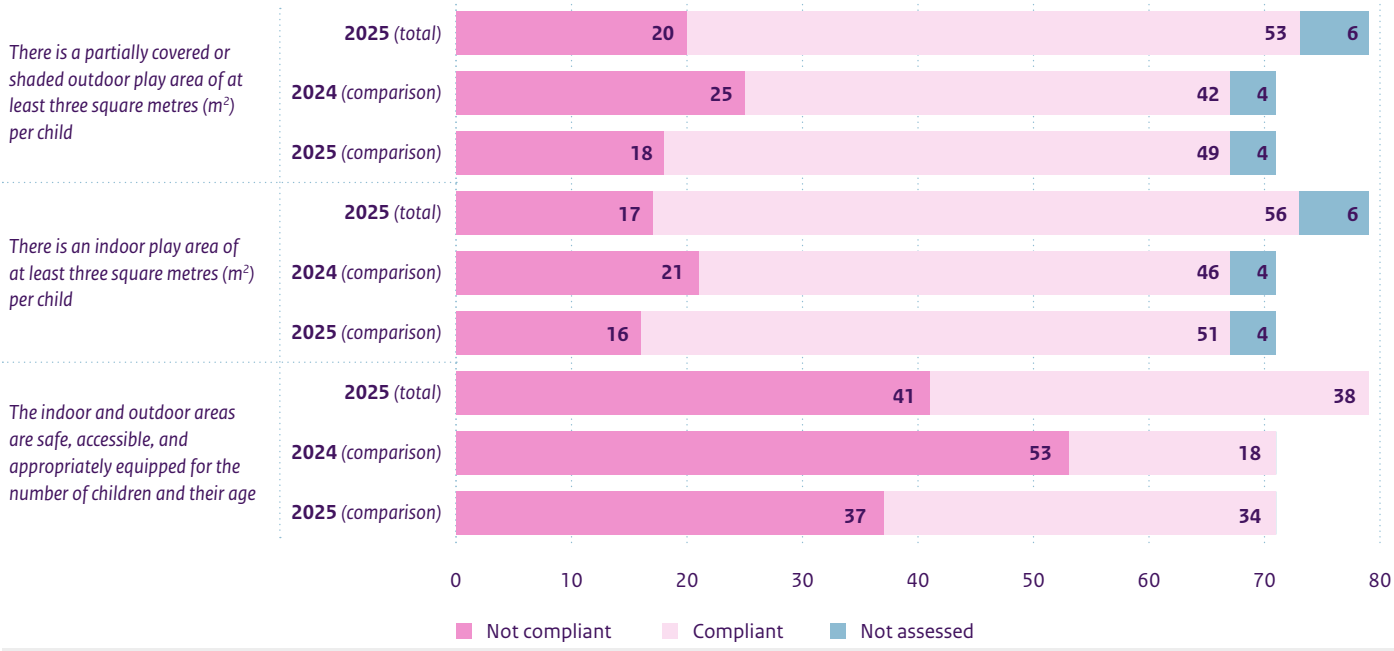


Housing

With this standard we assess whether the locations comply with the requirements for the indoor and outdoor areas.

- ✔ In 2025, the safety, accessibility, and appropriateness of the indoor and outdoor areas improved compared to 2024.
- ✘ At more than half of the locations, the indoor and outdoor areas have still not been set up in a safe, accessible, and appropriate manner.

Figure 4. Housing in 2025 (n=79) and the assessments in 2024 and in 2025 (n=71)



Stimulation of children in their development

Offer

Upon the assessment of the offer we assess, inter alia, the programme that locations use to challenge children in their development through play. We also look at the layout of the areas and whether the play materials are in line with the development level of the children.

- ✔ In 2025, the offer at more than three quarters of the locations is satisfactory (50 Satisfactory and five Good).

- ✔ It is remarkable that in 2025 a number of locations received the assessment Good. That is better than in previous years. For instance, these locations have an offer where objectives and development areas are described for children who require additional support or additional challenges. The offer is evaluated regularly and potentially adjusted to this.
- ⚠ The number of locations where we assessed the offer as Room for Improvement is the same as in 2024.

Insight into development

Upon the assessment of the standard Insight into Development, we assess, inter alia, whether the location collects information about the development of each child in the various areas of development. We also assess if they do this with an observation tool.

- ✔ The outcome of the standard Insight into Development has, just like in 2024, improved: more locations received the assessment Satisfactory or the assessment Good. At locations that received the assessment Good, the development of the children is followed systematically and there is a targeted approach for children who require additional assistance or

actually require additional challenges. In addition, these locations also involved others, e.g. external experts and parents, in the support of the development of the children.

- ✗ Nonetheless, we assess the insight into the development of the children at approximately half of the location as Room for Improvement. Namely, some locations are not following the development of children systematically. Other locations

are not following the development of children in all areas of development or do not compare the development of the children to the expected development. As a result, it is unclear whether the children are at a disadvantage or actually at an advantage in their development. This makes it difficult for pedagogical employees to gear their conduct and offer to this.

Pedagogical-educational conduct

Upon the assessment of the pedagogical-educational conduct we assess, inter alia, whether professionals challenge the children in their development through play. For instance, we also assess if professionals stimulate the children in their independence.

- ✓ In 2025, we assessed the pedagogical-educational conduct at three quarters of the locations as Satisfactory.

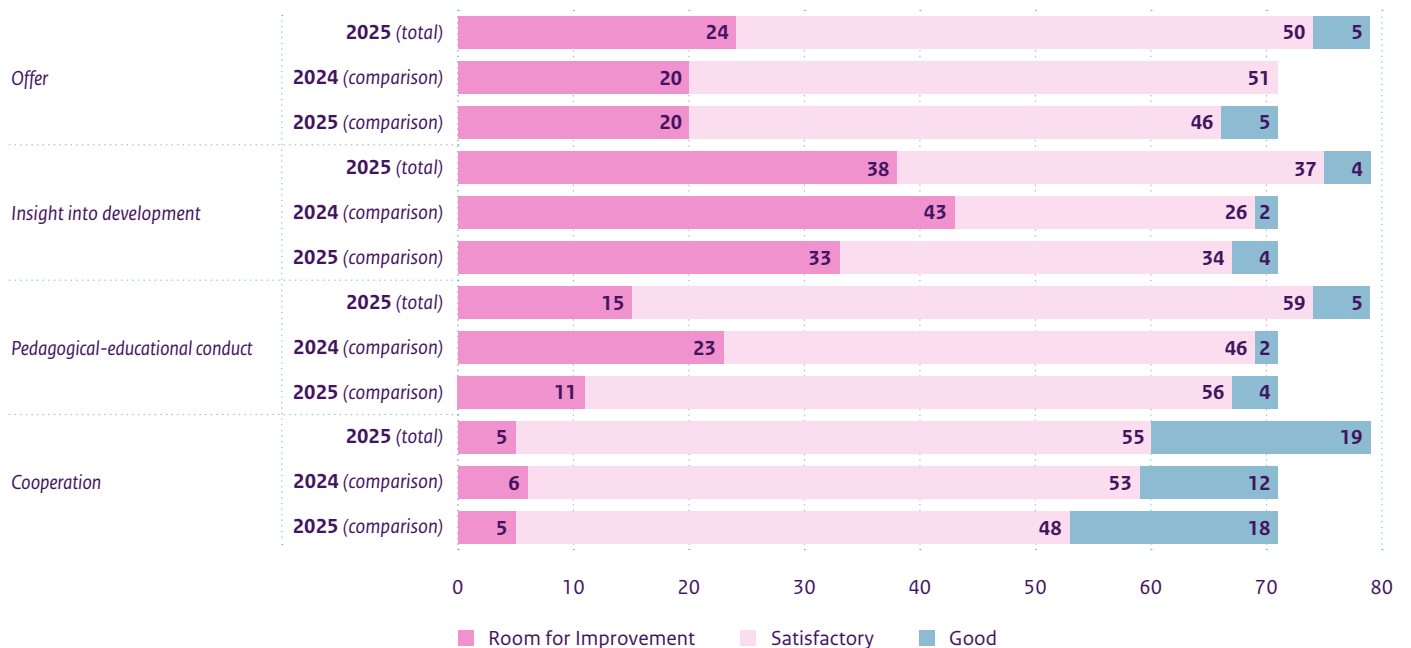
- ✓ At five locations we assessed the pedagogical-educational conduct as Good. Especially at the host parents we observe a positive trend (three of the five assessed as Good). At the locations that received the assessment Good, we observe pedagogical employees who provide for active involvement of children, who anticipate the developmental needs of the children, and who help the children progress towards the next step in their development. In addition, the pedagogical employees stimulate the interaction between the children.

Cooperation

With this standard we assess whether the location cooperates with the parents and the primary schools (in the context of the transfer) and whether they rely on external care partners, where required.

- ✓ Almost all locations cooperate with other institutions.
- ✓ At 19 locations we assessed the cooperation as Good. Examples are the structural and intensive cooperation with schools, parents, and other partners on the islands.

Figure 5. Stimulating children in their development in 2025 (n=79) and the opinions and assessments in 2024 and in 2025 (n=71)

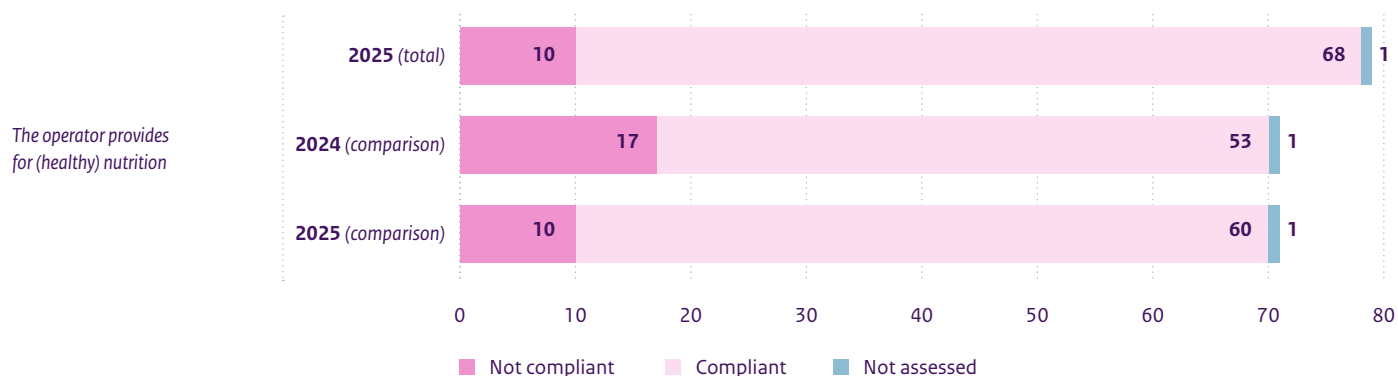


Nutrition

With this standard we assess whether the operators provide healthy nutrition.

- ✓ At most of the locations, the children receive healthy and varied nutrition on all days of the week.
- ✓ That is an improvement compared to 2024.

Figure 6. Nutrition in 2025 (in 2025) and the opinions in 2024 and in 2025 (n=71)



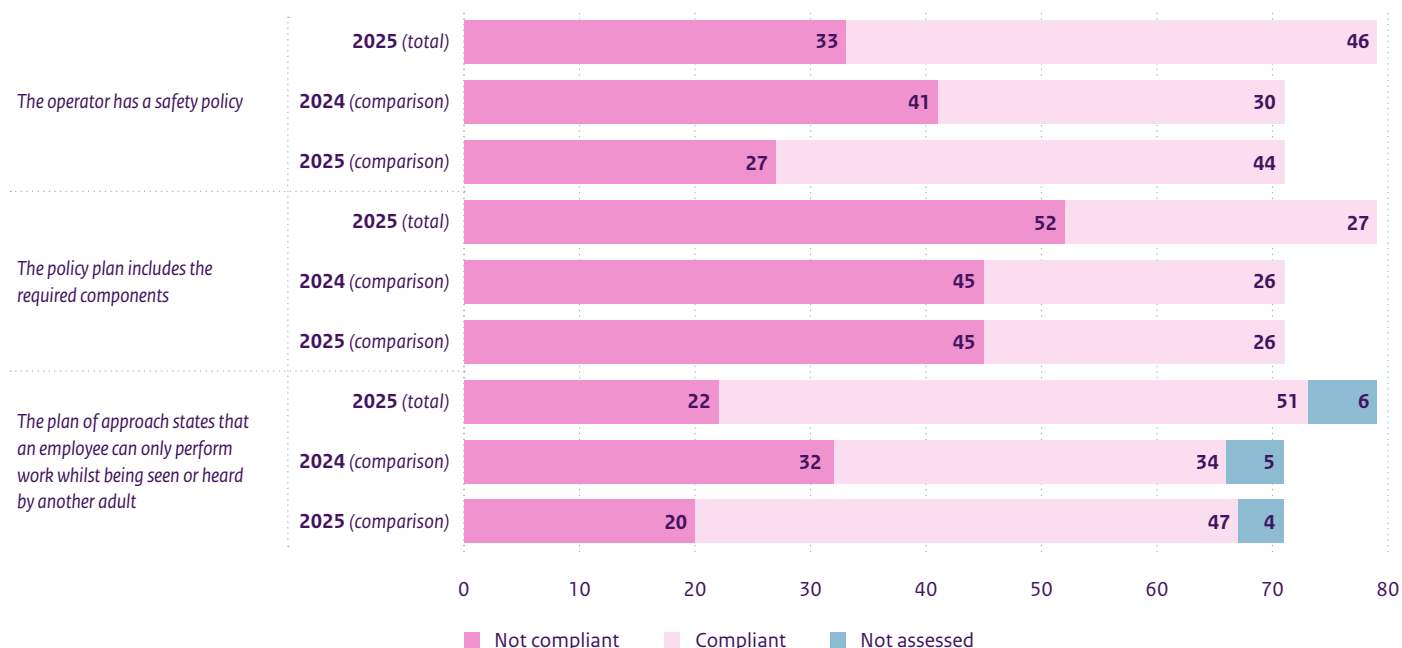
Safety

With this standard we assess the health and safety policy of the operator and whether the four eyes principle is described in the plan of approach.

- ✓ In 2025, slightly more than half of the locations have a health and safety policy. That is a strong improvement compared to 2024.

- ✓ Most of the locations describe the four eyes principle in their safety plan. This means that there is a plan of approach as a result of which an employee can always be seen or heard by another adult. That has also improved compared to 2024.
- ✗ At the same time, the safety policy at only a third of the locations complies with the requirements that are imposed on it. That is comparable to 2024.

Figure 7. Safety policy in 2025 (n=79) and the opinions in 2024 and in 2025 (n=71)



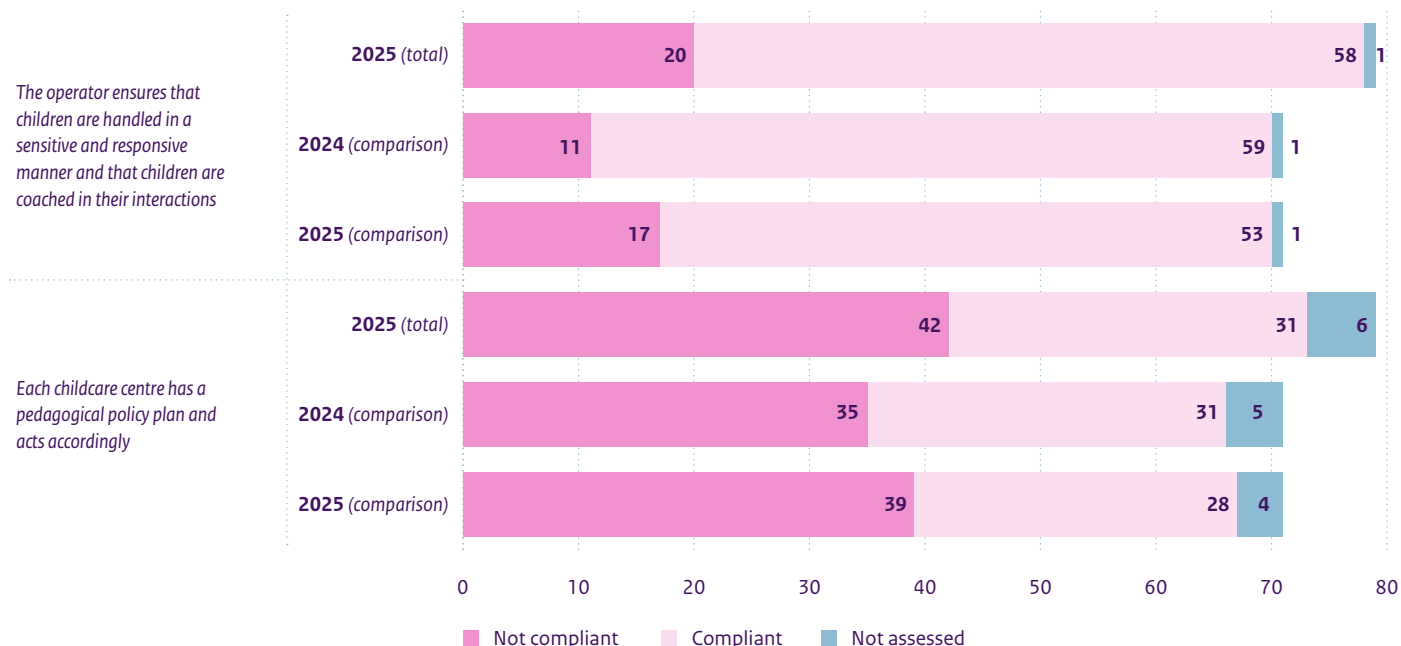
Pedagogical climate

The standard Pedagogical Climate resembles the standard Pedagogical-Educational Conduct that we described earlier on in this report. The pedagogical climate is about offering a supportive pedagogical climate that contributes to the development of personal, social, and societal competences. In addition, we assess whether an operator has a pedagogical policy plan and whether the operator acts accordingly.

- ✓ There is a positive climate at most of the locations.
- ✗ At 20 locations, the pedagogical climate was not in order during the annual audit. There was a tense atmosphere in one or more groups and undesired behaviour was not being corrected by the pedagogical employees. In addition, not all pedagogical employees handled the children in a sensitive and responsive manner.

- ⚠ As we also observed in 2024, this really must improve. A positive pedagogical climate is a condition for the development of children. Where the pedagogical quality was (very) concerning, we agreed on remedy arrangements with the operator and applied a short remedy period.
- ✗ In 2025, more than half of the locations do not have a (complete) pedagogical policy plan and/or do not act accordingly.
- ⚠ In 2024 we observed that this must really improve and that is still the case in 2025. We are concerned about operators not having the pedagogical policy plan in order. From 2026, a pedagogical policy plan is mandatory by law, and there are various statutory requirements that the plan must meet

Figure 8. Pedagogical climate in 2025 (n=79) and the opinions in 2024 and in 2025 (n=71)



Steering on quality improvement

Vision, ambitions and objectives

This standard is about the question whether the childcare centre has a vision of good childcare, prepared objectives and ambitions for this, and is steering on their achievement.

- ✓ In 2025, the (operators of the) locations went through a development when formulating vision, ambitions and objectives.

- ✓ Approximately half of the locations receive the assessment Satisfactory and this year eight locations receive the assessment Good. This standard is not assessed for the host parents.
- ✗ Nonetheless, more than a third of the locations are still not working in an effective and systemic manner on the improvement of the quality of childcare. For instance, these locations did not describe a vision on the quality or did not formulate specific objectives, or insufficiently, to improve the quality.

Steering on implementation and quality culture

This standard focuses on the implementation. The childcare centre must achieve the objectives for good childcare, safeguard the preconditions, and adjust in the interim, where required.

- ✓ In 2025, the management of increasingly more locations is safeguarding a professional culture and expertise advancement of the staff. For instance, they involve the staff in the quality

improvement of the locations, inter alia by regularly discussing the development objectives of both the staff and the location in the staff meetings.

- ✓ At 47 locations we assess the Steering on Implementation and Quality Culture as Satisfactory.
- ✓ On this component, we assess 16 locations as Good. That is a doubling compared to 2024. At these locations, the management and the staff continuously work together on the (improvement of the) quality.

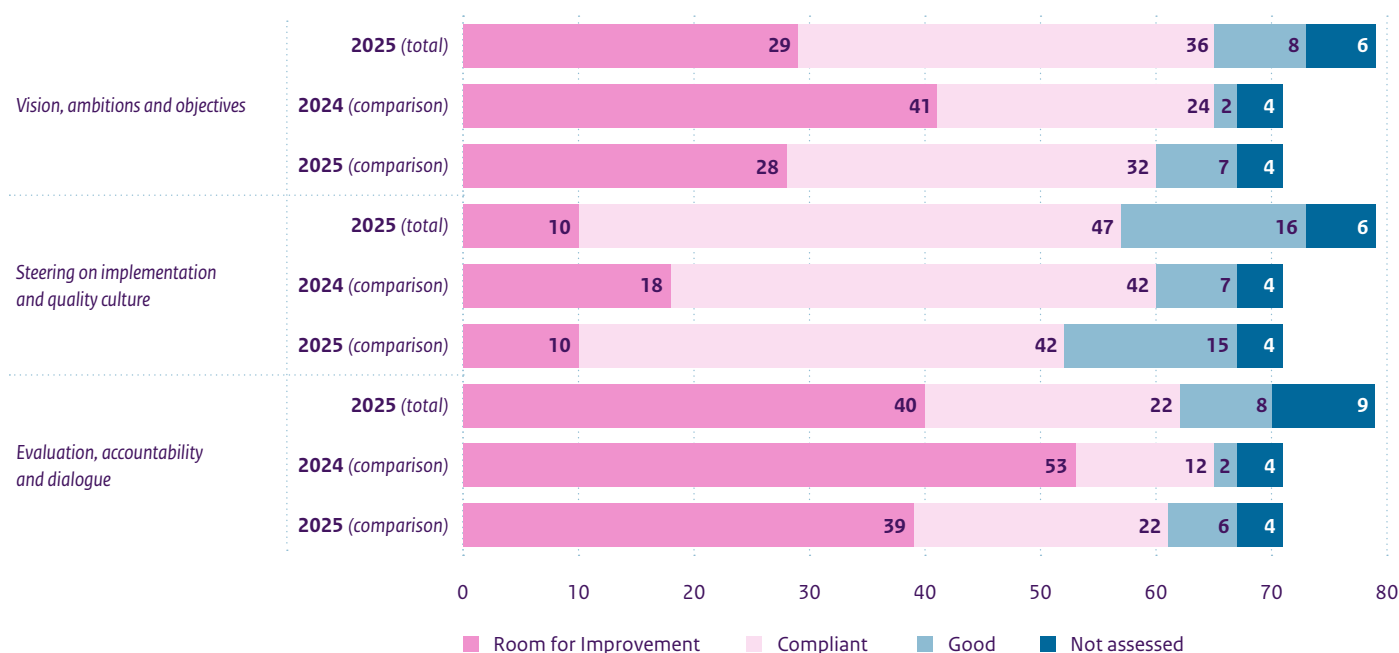
Evaluation, accountability and dialogue

With this standard we assess whether the childcare centre systematically evaluates and analyses whether the objectives are achieved. It also regards the question whether the policy needs to be adjusted and whether internal and external stakeholders are involved in a dialogue.

- ✓ The assessment of Evaluation, Accountability and Dialogue has improved compared to 2024.

- ✓ There are increasingly more locations with the assessment Good.
- ✗ Yet improvements are still possible in the area of quality care: at more than half of the locations sufficient evaluation, accountability and dialogue are still out of the question. This can be attributed to the fact that the location has not formulated improvement objectives yet or because no systematic evaluation of the objectives takes place.

Figure 9. Steering on quality improvement in 2025 (n=79) and the opinions and assessments in 2024 and in 2025 (n=71)



What has changed between 2021-2022 and 2025?

In 2021-2022 we audited 67 locations. Of those, we audited 56 again in 2025. The other locations have closed in the meantime. At these 56 locations, we compared the quality of the childcare in 2021-2022 to 2025. We looked at the number of locations that received the assessment Satisfactory / Good or the assessment Compliant for more than half of the standards in the quality areas.

Quality improvement between 2021-2022 and 2025

In table 2, it can be seen that the quality of the quality areas Administration, Staff & Housing and Health & Safety remained almost the same. It remains difficult for the operators to comply

with the requirements in the area of training requirements and VOG. The many staff changes may play a role here. We observe that childcare staff prefer a position in education due to the better secondary terms and conditions of employment.

The childcare process and the quality steering have, however, improved in recent years. In 2021-2022, not even a quarter of the locations complied with more than half of the requirements in the quality areas Childcare Process and Steering, Quality Care & Ambitions. In 2025, more than three quarters of the locations comply with the requirements.

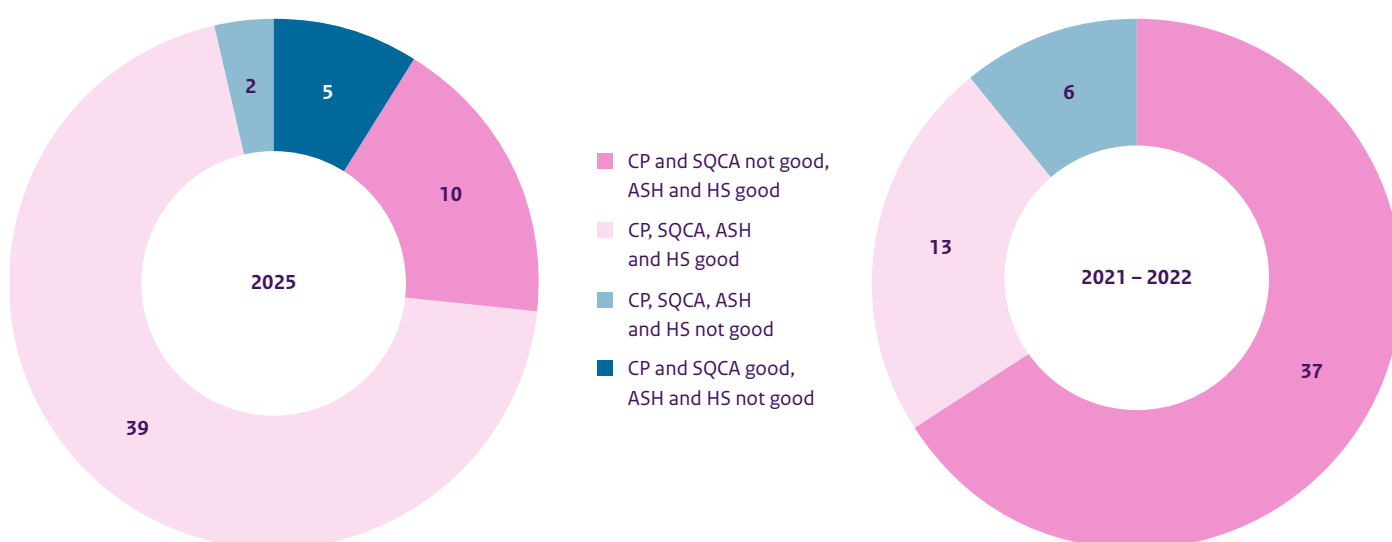
Table 2. Difference in Satisfactory / Compliant on the standards

	Administration, Staff & Housing and Health & Safety		Childcare Process and Steering, Quality Care & Ambitions	
	2021-2022	2025	2021-2022	2025
Half or less of the standards Satisfactory or Compliant	6	7	43	12
More than half of the standards Satisfactory or Compliant	50	49	13	44

However, more improvement remains possible. At some locations the opportunities for improvement can predominantly be found in the areas Administration, Staff & Housing and Health & Safety. At other locations it is actually more about improvement on the quality areas Childcare Process and Steering, Quality Care &

Ambitions. The quality of these locations on the aforementioned quality areas must truly improve. There are also two locations that meet all standards in these areas. Even more locations (24) comply with the standards from the quality areas Childcare Process and Steering, Quality Care & Ambitions.

Figure 10. Number of Satisfactory assessments on the quality areas in 2021-2022 and in 2025



CP: Childcare Process, SQCA: Steering, Quality Care & Ambition, ASH: Administration, Staff & Housing, HS: Health & Safety

Conclusions and recommendations

The quality of childcare in the Caribbean Netherlands has improved since the start of the BES(t) 4 kids programme and the supervision on the quality of childcare. This predominantly applies to the quality of the childcare process and the quality care: the children are being stimulated more in their development. Moreover, the childcare management is steering increasingly more on the improvement of the quality of childcare. We do still observe room for improvement. This room also applies to locations with the assessment Satisfactory because there are locations with the assessment Good; other locations can learn from them. Below, recommendations are provided for the various target groups.

🔊 Call to the professionals

- To be allowed to work in childcare, you must have a current VOG (at most two years old) that is linked to the operator of the childcare where you work. So make sure that you have this.
- Childcare changes continuously. There are new insights and the requirements that are imposed on childcare change. Hence, make sure that you stay informed and you continue developing yourself. Then you become ever better at your job.
- To become better at your job, you can also learn from others. Ask for help or training if you want to continue developing yourself and help a colleague if you notice that they are struggling with something. There is more information for professionals in the childcare sector available in the training database of BES(t) 4 kids: [Tools - BES\(t\)4 kids](#). Use this to improve your vocational knowledge, to gain new insights, and to work on your professional development in a targeted manner.
- Read the Childcare Manual.

🔊 Call to the operators of the locations and host parents

- Continue focussing on improvement of both the daily care quality and the further policy development.
- Seek support during the improvement of the quality and use the support offer of the pedagogical coach(es). Also use the training database of BES(t) 4 kids: [Tools - BES\(t\)4 kids](#).
- Continue actively stimulating the professionals in achieving a higher training level and offer targeted coaching and support in this regard.
- There are locations that already have their quality mostly in order. Other operators and host parents can learn from this. Find each other and learn from each other to improve the quality.
- The Childcare Act BES comes into force on 1 January 2026. Make sure that you are and remain up to date of the new legislation and regulations. To this end, also go to: [Legislation and regulations - BES\(t\) 4 kids](#).
- Read the Childcare Manual.

🔊 Call to the Public Entities

- Consider acceleration of administrative procedures like VOG and work and residence permits for the professional childcare group in order that staff can be deployed faster and the staff shortage can be reduced.
- Continue the support and coaching of operators and host parents, also focussing on the new requirements that apply to childcare from 1 January 2026.
- Safeguard sufficient suitable and affordable housing for childcare locations.

🔊 Call to the Central Government

- Continue supporting the operators, host parents, and pedagogical employees in the coming years in complying with the requirements included in the Childcare Act BES.
- Assist in making the childcare sector more attractive to work in, for instance via better terms and conditions of employment for childcare on the islands and support with the conclusion of a Collective Labour Agreement.
- Provide for sufficient appropriate and accessible training opportunities for the professional group.
- Stay alert to signals of the operators and host parents on the islands regarding the quality and financing, and adjust, where required (inter alia via the implementation test of the Childcare Act BES in 2026). Include the supervision.
- Evaluate the implementation of the Childcare Act BES and also include the supervision.

What is next?

On 1 January 2026, the Childcare Act BES ([Childcare Act BES](#)) took effect. From that date, we supervise according to a new assessment framework that includes all legislation and regulations ([Childcare supervision frameworks Bonaire, Saba, and St. Eustatius | Inspectorate of Education](#)). We continue annually auditing the quality of childcare at all locations. We do this in association with the local inspectors of the Public Entities. From 1 January 2026, we publish all reports about the childcare locations on our website [Supervision Results](#).

Other recent surveys

- [Final report benchmarking quality childcare Caribbean Netherlands](#)
- [Interim measurement quality childcare Caribbean Netherlands in 2023](#)
- [Quality of childcare on Bonaire, Saba, and St. Eustatius in 2024](#)

Colofon

Photo front page Lincoln Charles

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