

Pre-Primary Education

As per the RTE Act 2009, the government took appropriate steps in 2019-20 to provide for pre-school education so that, the child is prepared to enter an elementary education system. Early Childhood Education in Karnataka is predominantly delivered by the ICDS scheme of the WCD and the Samagra Shikshana Karnataka started the trend of pre-school education in Government Schools in the year 2019-20 in the existing KPSs. Pre-school education equips children with pre-requisite skills which make learning in Class 1 easier and faster for children so exposed. 908 SDMCs responded to the demand for pre-primary classes by the community, by starting pre-primary classes in government primary schools, in the name of “Makkala Mane” and so many others. But it has been observed that a scientific ECE curriculum is not followed in these schools, as followed in Schools started by the Government, developed by a group of experts consisting of members appointed by the Department of Women and Child Department, UNICEF and Azim Premji University.

With the commencement of Karnataka Public Schools in 2018-19, where the K12 concept was introduced by consolidating different sections of the schools, Government of Karnataka started a new dawn in the school education space. In the academic year 2019-20, the government decided to start pre-primary sections in these consolidated schools hence marching towards realizing the dream of having pre-primary to pre-university classes under the same roof. Several interventions around the world have shown that investment in early childhood development has long-term benefits for both the individual and the community in general.

Implementation Process

➤ 276 pre-primary sections of LKG were started in the 276 KPSs.

- Classrooms to start LKG classes were identified in the KPSs; painted in vibrant colours; and classrooms were prepared on the lines of 'Balasnehi' classrooms with a print rich conducive environment which facilitates learning,
- Though, the admission of students per section was limited to 30 only, there was a surge of admissions for the LKG section and the year 2019-20 saw an admission of 8936 students into the 276 KPSs.
- The curriculum for Pre-primary is developed in collaboration with UNICEF, education experts, NGO partners and DSERT .
- The Teaching Learning Materials (TLM) were customized and chosen with care to enhance the little ones' social, physical and intellectual development and distributed the same to all 276 KPSs.
- In many schools mini outdoor play areas were constructed for the pre-primary children with support from the SDMCs and other funds.
- One teacher and one assistant were selected for the Pre-primary sections temporarily by the respective SDMCs as per the eligibility criteria developed by Samagra Shikshana Karnataka.
- A group of educational consultants with expertise in Early Childhood Education with State Resource Teachers developed training modules to train all teachers selected for the pre-primary sections.
- These teachers were trained in the above modules at the State level for 8 days to understand the curriculum; the approaches to transacting the developed ECE curriculum in the early childhood classrooms; handling TLMs and equip them with the right mind-set to receive the young 4 year olds. These trainings were executed in collaboration with DSERT, SSA, Azim Premji Foundation, Kalike, UNICEF, Akshara Foundation, Prajayatna and TIDE Learning Systems.
- Teachers were encouraged to teach local poems and tell stories so that children can connect to them.

- Teachers were given a salary, equal to that of a primary guest teacher (Rs.7500) and the assistants were given a remuneration equal to an ayah's present consolidated salary in schools (Rs. 5000).
- Nutritious mid-day meals, milk and snacks like chikkis, fruits, biscuits, etc was provided to pre-primary children regularly. The nutritional support provided was matched with the current existing practise followed in the Anganwadi Centres.
- With the cooperation of health department, health checkups were regularly done for the pre-primary children.

Objectives of the Training

- To train teachers to prepare a classroom, that provides a child friendly environment that is safe, secure, caring and stimulating.
- To make them understand how to enhance the social, intellectual and physical development of the tiny tots through play. .
- To enable teachers to work within the framework of Early Years Foundation Stage and prepare children for formal education.
- To transact the classroom in such a way to instill in young children basic skills in reading, counting and identifying.
- To train teachers to help children grow and interact with their peers and build social skills.
- To enable teachers to introduce the children to the world around them.

Teacher Handbooks with a lot of indoor and outdoor activities to facilitate learning and prepare young children for elementary education and illustrated very colourfully and attractively.